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HISTORICAL PARALLELS.

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HISTORICAL

P A R A L L E L S.

By A. T. Hallkin

IN THREE VOLUMES

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HISTORICAL PARALLELS.

INTRODUCTION.

WORKS of history may be divided into two great classes : those which select a single action or a detached period for their subject ; and those which follow a nation through the whole or a large portion of its existence ; and which, embracing a number of such subjects, compensate for giving less minute and accurate information upon each, by explaining their relation, and the influence which they have exerted upon each other. To the former belong Thucydides, Xenophon, and Cæsar ; to the latter Diodorus and Livy : or, in English literature, we may take Clarendon and Hume respectively as the representatives of these divisions. It is obvious that the method of treating themes so different in character, must also be essentially different ; that for an historian of the latter class to aim at the particularity which we expect in the former, would involve something of the same absurdity as if a landscape painter were to give to an extended horizon the distinctness and detail which are proper to his foregrounds or to a closely bounded scene. If our curiosity is not satisfied by a comprehensive view, the remedy is to be found by multiplying pictures of its most striking parts, not by introducing into one canvas a multitude of objects which must fatigue and confuse the mind, and obscure those leading features which ought to stand out in prominent relief. Any one who wished to become acquainted with the nature and characteristics of a country, which he could not survey personally,

would neither confine his inspection to bird's-eye and panoramic views, nor content himself with a series of detached paintings, though representing separately whatever was most worthy of observation : in the one case his ideas, though perhaps correct, would necessarily be slight and superficial ; in the other, his knowledge of the parts would never enable him to form an accurate judgment of the whole.

Valuable, therefore, as is the assistance of those authors who have devoted their talents and learning to epitomizing and rendering accessible the story of past ages, it is far from desirable that we should content ourselves with a blind trust in them, without checking their assertions, and filling up their sketches by a more detailed knowledge than it is possible for them to communicate. To apply these observations to the present work, the History of Greece contained in the Library of Useful Knowledge necessarily gives a very short account of many things which deserve to be known in detail, both on account of their historical notoriety and for the intrinsic value which they possess as striking examples of human power, passion, and suffering. Much of the excessive commendation which has been bestowed upon ancient virtue and patriotism ought probably to be attributed to the eager interest naturally excited by the revival of learning and the peculiar circumstances under which it took place. The discovery of the works of the most celebrated writers of antiquity, whose names at least had not been forgotten, must at any time have produced much curiosity and excitement : and peculiarly so when modern literature did not yet possess many names to divide the palm of genius with them. Besides this the political circumstances of the Italian states, in which the new discoveries were at first most successfully and generally prosecuted, would give an additional interest and a peculiar bias to the study of ancient literature ; for their inhabitants would naturally be disposed, as Italians, to exult in the glories of ancient Italy, and as republicans to look for patterns both of polity and of conduct among the famous republics of Greece and Rome.

A contrary cause, in a later age, and in countries subject to arbitrary power, would probably conduce to the continuance of the same feeling, when the prevalent subjection of public opinion made it safer to enforce sentiments of freedom and patriotism under the mask of an overstrained admiration for actions, frequently of very questionable character, done in times long past, than openly to profess the love of republican simplicity and liberty, which was willingly left to be inferred. The usual course of education long tended, and in an inferior degree perhaps still tends, to cherish the same indiscriminate enthusiasm. The first histories put into the hands of children are usually those of Greece and Rome, taken not from the sober and comparatively unprejudiced relations of the earliest authorities, but from Plutarch, and other compilers of a later age, who, living themselves under despotic power, and compelled to veil their philosophical aspirations after a better state of polity and morals under extravagant praises of a by-gone period of imaginary virtue and disinterestedness, were for the most part ready to warp truth into correspondence with their own views. In such works actions are held up to admiration because they are brilliant, without much inquiry whether they were justifiable; wanton and unjust aggressions, and other crimes of still deeper dye, are glossed over upon some false plea of patriotism; or their moral quality is never alluded to, and the young reader is too much captivated by the splendour of bravery and talent, to remember that the ends to which these gifts are directed should never be forgotten in estimating their claim to applause.* But whatever be our opinion

* A striking instance of this occurs in Justin. Speaking of Harmodius and Aristogiton (see chap. v.), he says, "One of the murderers, being put to the torture to extract the names of his accomplices, enumerated all the nearest friends of Hippias. These were all put to death, and being asked whether any others were privy to his designs, he answered, that now none remained whom he wished to perish, except the tyrant himself. The city, admonished by his virtue, expelled Hippias."—Lib. ii. 9. The *virtue* of this act con-

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touching Grecian and Roman virtue, or the moral character of the most celebrated portions of their history, these have obtained a degree of currency and notoriety which render familiar acquaintance with them almost necessary for the full understanding of much even of modern literature. The object of this work is to supply, in part, these details from the original historians, and to compare or contrast them with other remarkable incidents of ancient or modern times; in hope of forming a collection of narratives of some interest to those who are not largely read in history. And even those who are in some degree familiar with the subjects here treated, but whose knowledge is chiefly drawn from compilations of modern date, may be gratified by the variety in style, feelings, and opinions observable in a collection of extracts from authors of various dates and nations.

We have selected from the Grecian History, in chronological order, as furnishing the readiest principle of arrangement, a series of occurrences of which some have obtained remarkable notoriety; some, being less known, are either striking in themselves, or characteristic of the age and people to which they belong; and finally some, with less intrinsic value, may serve to introduce curious or instructive matter of comparison. To every person well acquainted with the subject, many things will probably occur, of which the omission may be regretted. Completeness, however, is evidently unattainable in an undertaking of this sort, and the passages taken from Grecian history have necessarily been regulated in part by the correspondences which presented themselves in the histories of other nations. It has been our object to draw examples from a great variety of sources; from different countries, in different ages, and in different states of

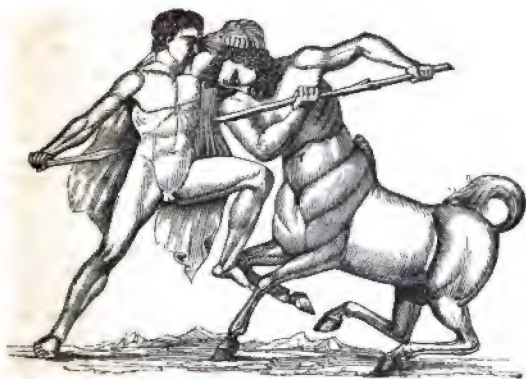
sisted in sacrificing innocent lives to his revenge, by means of a lying accusation: and the stern endurance of this man is dignified with the praise of fortitude and patriotism, without the slightest reference to its atrocious injustice. The story itself rests upon Justin's authority, and may reasonably be rejected as an improbable fiction.

civilization : and to show that no particular virtues or vices have been inherent in any age or nation : believing that human nature and human passions are everywhere alike, and that the great differences in national character are mainly to be ascribed to external circumstances and training. Comparisons of contrast, therefore, are no less valuable than comparisons of resemblance, when we can trace the causes which have produced a difference in conduct. It only remains to add, that we have not always thought it necessary to require a close analogy either of motives or of actions.

The instances chosen have not been very strictly confined to what rests upon undoubted testimony. Perhaps we learn little less of the habits and opinions of men, from ascertaining what they have believed of others, than from knowing what they have done themselves ; and, therefore, even works of fiction may be resorted to in some degree, care being taken to distinguish the character of the authorities. For example, we should have no hesitation in quoting even from the *Mort d'Arthur*, and still more from the earlier romances on which it is founded, in illustration of the manners of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, in which those romances were written ; or, though on different grounds, the admirable narratives of the plagues of Florence and London by Boccaccio and Defoe, which probably are no less trustworthy for the character of the narrative, and in a great degree for the facts themselves, than Thucydides' description of the plague at Athens. Again, there is a sort of debateable ground, where genuine history begins to gain the ascendant over fable, as in the case of Aristomenes and Wallace, where we cannot tell, nor is it important to know, the exact measure of truth contained in the legends concerning them. The outlines of their lives we have reason to believe to be correct, and rejecting from their exploits all that is grossly improbable, the remainder will furnish us with a sufficiently clear idea of the accomplishments and adventures of a warrior of their respective ages. The poem of Blind Harry abounds in improbable fictions, but much more information concerning Wallace

and his contemporaries may be gained from it than from the meagre chronicles which composed the graver literature of the age. From such sources, therefore, we shall not scruple to borrow, though not without advertising the reader of their nature, and endeavouring, where necessary, to draw the boundary line between truth and fiction.

For reasons above stated, our extracts have usually been taken from contemporary authors, or at least from the earliest authorities extant. Where this rule has been departed from, it is because the originals offer no striking passages to select, and are too prolix to be given entire. In this case, condensation becomes necessary, and we have gladly availed ourselves of the labours of others who have already performed that task, in preference to seeking novelty at the expense perhaps of accuracy or elegance. For the same reason existing translations have been used, whenever a good translation of the particular passage could be found. Where none such occurred, we have endeavoured to adhere closely to our author, and even where his narrative has been much compressed, to give, as far as was possible, not only his substance, but his words.



CHAPTER I.

Mythic period of Grecian history—Savage state of Greece compared with that of Scandinavia—Anecdotes of Northern warriors—Hercules—Theseus—State of Greece in their time, illustrated by that of England subsequent to the Conquest—Argonautic expedition—Theban war—Story of Don Pedro of Castile—Trojan war.

THE traditions from which our knowledge of what is called the mythic age of Greece, or the age of fable, from the earliest notices of it to the Trojan war, is almost entirely derived, furnish few materials for a work like this, for where everything is misty and undefined, there can be little opportunity for comparison. The wonderful poetic talent displayed in their narration and embellishment has, however, given them a place in history, and an importance otherwise undeserved, and men study the actions and genealogy of an Achaian prince, as gravely as if he had been really the descendant of Jupiter, and the conqueror of monsters and oppressors innumerable. It becomes the more

interesting therefore to inquire into the actual condition of Greece in its earliest times, and ascertain, if possible, whether the godlike men, sprung from the Gods, of whose superhuman powers and exploits succeeding ages have read, until by the mere force of repetition they have half believed them, had in reality any advantage over barbarians of other races and regions. To guide us in the inquiry we have two sorts of information, totally distinct in their nature: the meagre notices of authentic history, and a copious store of mythological and poetical legends. So far as the former is available, we have no reason to think that the heroic age had much advantage over those dark times in which the foundations of modern Europe were laid. Passing over the account given by Thucydides of the earliest inhabitants of Greece as being applicable to any savage race, in the next stage of society, when the arts had somewhat advanced, in the reign of Minos, the first person perhaps of whom any rational and credible account is given, a code of honour existed which made strength not only the first but the sum-total of all virtues, and filled the sea with pirates and the land with robbers.

“Minos was the most ancient of all that by report we know to have built a navy, and he made himself master of the now Grecian sea, and both commanded the Isles called Cyclades,* and also was the first who sent colonies into most of the same, expelling thence the Carians, and constituting his own sons there for governors, and also freed the sea from pirates as much as he could, for the better coming in, as is likely, of his own revenue.

“For the Grecians in old time and such barbarians† as in the continent lived near unto the sea or else inhabited the islands, when they began more often to cross over to one another in ships, became thieves, and

* The cluster of the Archipelago nearest Attica.

† The Greeks called all other nations barbarians, which generally means no more than people of a different stock.

went abroad under the conduct of their most puissant men, both to enrich themselves and to fetch in maintenance for the weak : and falling upon towns unfortified, and scatteringly inhabited, rifled them, and made this the best means of their living ; being at that time a matter nowhere in disgrace, but rather carrying with it something of glory. This is manifest by some that dwell on the continent, among whom, so it be performed nobly, it is still esteemed as an ornament. The same also is proved by some of the ancient poets, who introduce men questioning such as sail by, on all coasts alike, whether they be thieves or not ;* as a thing neither scorned by such as were asked, nor upbraided by those that were desirous to know. They also robbed one another within the main land : and much of Greece useth that old custom, as the Locrians called *Ozolæ* (or *Stinkards*), the Acarnanians, and those of the continent in that quarter unto this day. Moreover the fashion of wearing iron remaineth yet with the people of that continent from their old trade of thieving.

“For once they were wont throughout all Greece to go armed, because their houses were unfenced and travelling unsafe, and accustomed themselves like the barbarians to the ordinary wearing of their armour. And the nations of Greece that live so yet, do testify that the same manner of life was anciently universal to all the rest.”†

A condition of society identical with that described in the latter part of this extract still exists among the Curdish and Caucasian and other Asiatic mountaineers, and existed till lately in the Scottish Highlands. But descriptions of the latter have been multiplied, until

* So Nestor addresses Telemachus, “Strangers, who are you, from whence do you navigate the watery way? Is it with any settled purpose, or do you roam at hazard like robbers over the sea, who wander wagering their own lives, bearing evil to others?” *Odyss.* iii. 71.

† Thucyd. book i. chap. 4, 5, 6. We use Hobbes’ translation.

they have become familiar in men's mouths as household terms ; and we pass in preference to a less hackneyed subject. In the eighth and ninth centuries the piratical spirit of ancient Greece was revived among those fierce Danes and Norwegians, who led a life of constant rapine and bloodshed ; of interminable warfare at home, of frightful devastation abroad. "The Sea-kings of the North were a race of beings whom Europe beheld with horror. Without a yard of territorial property, with no wealth but their ships, no force but their crews, and no hope but from their swords, they swarmed upon the boisterous ocean, and plundered in every district that they could approach..... It is declared to have been a law or custom in the North, that one of the male children should be selected to remain at home to inherit the government. The rest were exiled to the ocean, to wield their sceptres amid the turbulent waters. The consent of the northern societies entitled all men of royal descent, who assumed piracy as a profession, to enjoy the name of kings, though they possessed no territory. The sea-kings had the same honour, but they were only a portion of those pirates, or *vikings*, who in the ninth century were covering the ocean. Not only the children of the kings, but every man of importance equipped ships, and roamed the seas to acquire property by force. Piracy was not only the most honourable occupation and the best harvest of wealth ; it was not only consecrated to public estimation by the illustrious who pursued it, but no one was esteemed noble, no one was respected, who did not return in the winter to his home with ships laden with booty."* Part of the regulations of a band of pirates is preserved by Bartholinus, and may serve as a specimen of the better class, though the reader may not be inclined to agree with him in considering them as men "devoted to virtue, bravery, and humanity, rather than to the oppression of innocent persons." These regulations were called the Constitutions of King Half. "No one might wear a

* Turner, Ang.-Sax.

sword more than an ell in length, that they might be compelled to close in battle. Each was to be equal in strength to twelve ordinary men. They made prisoners neither women nor boys. None was to bind his wounds until the lapse of twenty hours. These men everywhere infested the land, and everywhere were victorious. They lay at anchor at the ends of headlands. They never raised bulwarks on their ships' sides, and never lowered their sails, let the wind blow as it would. Their captain never had in his ship more than sixty men." No less creditable were the ordinances of Hialmar, the sum of which was, that his men should plunder neither traders nor husbandmen; that they should neither rob women of their money, nor carry them off against their consent: and should not eat raw flesh.* The fiercer class indulged in this disgusting food, and washed it down suitably with draughts of blood. Savage in all things, it was an amusement to toss infants from one to another, and catch them on the points of their lances. Many used to work themselves literally into a state of bestial ferocity. Those who were subject to these paroxysms were called Berserkir: they studied to resemble wild beasts; they excited themselves to a strength which has been compared to that of bears; and this unnatural power was succeeded, as we may well suppose, by corresponding debility. In the French and Italian romances, we frequently find a warrior endowed, for a part of the day, with a double or treble share of strength; and it is not improbable that the fiction may have been derived from this species of frenzy, which is thus described by the Danish historian, Saxo Grammaticus. "Sivald had seven sons, so skilled in magic, that, impelled by the sudden access of fury, they used often to howl savagely, to gnaw their shields, to devour live coals, and rush fearlessly into fire; and this passion could only be appeased by confinement in fetters, or by human blood." This Sivald and Haldan were rivals

* Bartholinus, De Causis Contemptæ a Danis Mortis, lib. ii. 9.

for the Swedish crown. Sivald challenged Haldan to decide their quarrel by contending alone with himself and his seven sons. The latter answered that the legitimate form of the duel did not admit of more than two. "No wonder," replied his antagonist, "that a man without wife or offspring, whose mind and body are alike deficient in warmth, should refuse the proffered encounter. But my children, who own me as the author of their existence, and myself, have one common origin, and must be considered as one man." The force of the argument was admitted, and, in obedience to this modest request, Haldan knocked out the brains of the eight.

The same warrior was challenged by another Berserkir, named Harthben, who always had twelve chosen men in attendance to prevent his doing mischief when the fit was upon him. Upon hearing that Haldan undertook to fight himself and his followers, he was seized with a paroxysm which was not subdued until he had killed six of them, by way of trying his hand: and then he was killed by his antagonist, as he richly deserved, for throwing away half his chance.* So also we read that Odin could blunt the weapons of his enemies; that his soldiers went to battle without armour, biting their shields, raging like wolves or dogs: like bears or bulls in strength, they slaughtered their foes, and were themselves invulnerable to fire and sword.† At length, however, this passion changed from a distinction to a reproach, and was ultimately prohibited by penal laws.

Harold Harfager, or the Fairhaired, who consolidated Norway under his sceptre, A.D. 910, cleared the Northern Ocean from the scourge of piracy, as did Minos the Grecian seas. Still the spirit of depredation was alive. The spread of Christianity moderated the excesses of the Northmen, but it was long ere their fondness for freebooting was extinguished; nay, the very rites of religion were employed to give a sanction to robbery. Maritime expeditions seemed to the Danes pious and ne-

* Saxo, lib. vii.

† Bartholinus, ii. 5.

cessary, that they might protect themselves from the incursions of their Slavonic neighbours on the continent, and piracy was therefore practised under certain laws, which in the opinion of Bartholinus breathe a spirit of defence rather than of aggression. "Pirates had power to take such ships as appeared suited to their purpose, even without consent of the owners, upon payment of one-eighth of the booty by way of hire. Before a voyage they made confession to the priests, and having undergone penance, they received the sacrament, as if at the point of death, believing that things would go more prosperously if they duly propitiated God before war. Content with their food and armour, they avoided burdening their vessels, and took nothing that could delay their voyage. Their watches were frequent, their mode of life sparing. They slept leaning upon their oars. Their battles were numerous: their victory ever easy, and almost bloodless. The booty was shared equally, the master receiving no larger portion than a common rower. Those Christians whom they found enslaved in the captured vessels, they presented with clothing, and dismissed to their own homes."*

The frantic ravages of these barbarians have been described by the sufferers, and belong in part to our own history; while those committed by the unknown tribes who two thousand years before occupied the other extremity of Europe, are long since forgotten, or remembered only in the flattering traditions of their countrymen. The former, therefore, are known and execrated, while the latter stand fair with the world: and in the absence of evidence, we are far from wishing to impute to them that bestial ferocity which so often disgraced the Northmen: but who can compare the passages just given with that quoted from Thucydides, without being convinced that they refer to corresponding periods of civilization, and describe similar principles, if not similar modes of action? And as the best historical accounts which we can procure represent the feelings and habits of the early

* Barthol., l. ii. 9.

Greeks as closely akin to those of our own barbarous ancestors, so their traditions and fables lead us to the same conclusion. The Scaldic poems bear, indeed, a more savage cast; some say from the inhospitable rigour of our northern sky; but more probably because we possess them in their original or nearly their original state, while the earliest Greek compositions extant were written in an age comparatively civilized. But the heroes of both were actuated by the same spirit. Siegfried and Wolf Dietrich differ little but in external ornament from Castor, or Achilles, or Diomed; their pride was in the same accomplishments, their delight in the same pleasures, their hope in an immortality of the same sensual enjoyments.*

* We speak with some degree of doubt, both from the fluctuating notions of the Greeks upon this head, and from imperfect acquaintance with their opinions. The unhesitating belief of the Celtic nations in a happy immortality was known even in the time of Lucan, and is celebrated by him in a fine and well-known passage. The immortality of Homer's heroes was mournful and discontented. "Talk not to me of death," says Achilles (Od. xi. 487), "I would rather be the hired servant of some needy man, whose means of life are scanty, than rule over the whole of the deceased." Other passages to the same effect are collected at the beginning of the third book of the Republic, by Plato, who objects seriously to their effect as making death an object of terror. Yet, in another passage, Homer speaks of the "Elysian plain, and the ends of the earth, where man's life is easiest, where there is no snow, nor rain, nor winter, but thither ocean ever wafts the clear-toned gales of the west to refresh men." (Od. iv. 565.) Hesiod, on the other hand (Works and Days, v. 166), and, some centuries after, Pindar (Ol. ii.), speak of a future life as perfectly happy, describing it in terms closely similar to those of the last quotation from Homer. All these writers appear to place their happiness in perfect rest: the blessed are no longer compelled to till the earth, or navigate the ocean; they lead a *careless* life; there is no reference to sensual pleasures, except that the earth produces fruits spontaneously thrice a year, nor even to their continuing to take delight in arms or in the chase. In later authors they are

Some sketch of the life of Starchaterus, a purely fictitious person, may serve as a specimen of these stories.

Starchaterus was born in Sweden, a few years after the Christian era. He was of giant stature, and of strength and courage correspondent to the magnitude of his frame, so that in prowess he was held inferior to none of mortal parentage; and, as he excelled all in bodily endowments, so his life was protracted to three times the usual duration of human existence. Like his great prototype, the Grecian Hercules, he traversed the neighbouring regions, and went even to Ireland and Constantinople in quest of adventures; but, unlike him, he was animated by a most intolerant hatred of everything approaching to luxury, insomuch that he treated an invitation to dinner as an insult, and inflicted severe punishment upon all who were so imprudently hospitable as to request his company. For it was the mark of a buffoon and parasite, he said, to run after the smell of another man's kitchen, for the sake of better fare.* In other respects the severity of his

described as retaining the habits and pleasures of life: see the note on the scholium of Callistratus, chap. v.; *Ov. Met.* iv. 444; and more especially the passage in *Virgil*, vi. 651, which, but for wanting the personal superintendence of Odin, bears much resemblance to a refined Valhalla.

The chief beheld their chariots from afar,
 Their shining arms, and coursers trained to war;
 Their lances fixed in earth, their steeds around,
 Free from their harness, graze the flowery ground.
 The love of horses, which they had alive,
 And care of chariots, after death survive.
 Some cheerful souls were feasting on the plain,
 Some did the song and some the choir maintain.

Dryden.

Mitford, on the other hand, says, that "the drunken paradise of the Scandinavian Odin was really a notion, as we learn from Plato, of the highest antiquity among the Greeks." (*Chap. ii. sect. 1.*) He has not, however, given references, and we much regret that we have not been able to find the passage.

* He had the advantage over Hercules here; see the *Alcestes*, v. 763, ed. Monk.

manners was more commendable ; when he found any of the classes who live by the follies or vices of mankind mixing with soldiers, he drove them away with the scourge, esteeming them unworthy to receive death from the hands of brave men. In addition to his other accomplishments, he was skilled in poetry, and persecuted luxury in verse no less successfully than by corporeal inflictions, as is evident from certain of his compositions, which have been translated into Latin by Saxo Grammaticus.

He went to Russia on purpose to fight Visin, who possessed the power of blunting weapons with a look, and trusting in this magic power, exercised all sorts of cruelty and oppression. Starchaterus rendered the charm of no avail by covering his sword with thin leather, and then obtained an easy victory.

Nine warriors of tried valour offered to Helgo, king of Norway, the alternative of doing battle singly against the nine, or losing his bride upon his marriage-day. Helgo thought it best to appear by his champion, and requested the assistance of Starchaterus, who was so eager for the adventure, that in following Helgo to the appointed place, in one day, and on foot, he performed a journey which had occupied the king, who travelled on horseback, during twelve days. On the morrow, which was the appointed day, ascending a mountain, which was the place of meeting, he chose a spot exposed to the wind and snow, and then, as if it were spring, throwing off his clothes, he set himself to dislodge the fleas that nestled in them. Then the nine warriors ascended the mountain on the other side, and showed the difference of their hardihood by lighting a fire in a sheltered spot. Not perceiving their antagonist, one went to look out from the mountain top, who saw at a distance an old man covered with snow up to the shoulders. They asked him if it were he who was to fight with them, and being answered in the affirmative, inquired further, whether he would receive them singly or all together. His reply was rather more churlish than the question deserved : " When the dogs bark at me, I drive them off all

together, and not one by one." Then, after a severe battle; he slew them all.

At last, being overtaken by age, he thought it fit to terminate his life before his glory was dimmed by decrepitude; for men used to consider it disgraceful for a warrior to perish by sickness. So he hung round his neck one hundred and twenty pounds of gold, the spoil of one Olo, to buy the good offices of an executioner, thinking it fit that the wealth which he had obtained by another man's death should be spent in procuring his own. And meeting Hather, whose father he had formerly slain, he exhorted him to take vengeance for that injury, and pointed out what he would gain by doing so. Hather willingly consented, and Starchaterus, stretching out his neck, bade him strike boldly, adding, for his encouragement, that if he leaped between the severed head and the trunk before the latter touched the earth, he would become invincible in arms. Now, whether he said this out of good will, or to be quits with his slayer, who ran a good chance of being crushed by the falling giant, is doubtful. The head, stricken off at a blow, bit the earth, retaining its ferocity in death: but Starchaterus' real meaning remained unknown, for Hather showed his prudence by declining to take a leap, which had he taken, he might never have leaped again.*

This is an early and rude specimen of an errant knight; the same character which was afterwards expanded into Roland and Launcelot, the paladins and peers of Charlemagne and Arthur, worthies closely allied to the heroes of Homer and Hesiod. The triple-bodied Geryon, the Nemean lion and Lernæan hydra, the deliverance of Andromeda by Perseus, the capture of the golden fleece, and above all, perhaps, Amycus, who compelled all strangers to box with him, till he was beaten by Pollux, and bound by oath to renounce the practice, are entirely in unison with the spirit and imagery of chivalric romance. Examples to this effect might easily be multiplied. But an essay on the fictions of the Greeks would

* Joannes Magnus, Hist. Gothorum.

be foreign to the scope of this publication : and it would be absurd to enter upon a critical investigation of a series of stories, extended by some chronologers over seven centuries, from the foundation of Argos to the Trojan war, while Newton contracts them within a century and a half, which tell of little but bloodshed, abductions, and violence of all sorts, intermixed, however, with notices of those who invented the useful arts and fostered the gradual progress of civilization. As we approach to the Trojan war, a sort of twilight history begins to dawn upon us. It is to what may seem at first the strongholds of fiction, to the exploits of Hercules and Theseus, that we refer. The earliest ascertained fact is the establishment of a regular government by Minos, who also cleared the sea from pirates. At no long interval the above-named heroes made another step in civilization ; they cleared the land from rapine, as Minos had cleared the sea. Other men, roaming in search of adventures, had carried bloodshed through the land at the suggestion of their passions or for the advancement of their fame ; but Hercules first traversed the earth with the express design of avenging the oppressed and exterminating their oppressors, and the example was soon after followed by his kinsman Theseus. Their exploits, of course, are chiefly fabulous : but it is worthy of observation that those of Theseus approach much nearer to probability than the far-famed labours of Hercules. Indeed the history of the former presents this peculiarity, that the accounts of his youth are consistent, and scarcely improbable, while those of his age run into all the extravagance of romance. Theseus, travelling from Troezen to Athens, was strongly urged to go by sea, the way by land being beset with robbers and murderers. He refused to do so, being inflamed with emulation of Hercules' renown ; and on the journey signalized himself by slaying Sinnis, surnamed the Pine-bender, because he dismembered travellers by tying them to the tops of trees forcibly brought together and then allowed to start asunder ; Procrustes, who exhibited a passion for uniformity worthy a German general of the old school, in

reducing all men to the measure of his own bed, by stretching those who were too short, and docking those who were too long; together with others of less note, and similar habits. That Plutarch believed in these stories is evident, from the tone in which he recites them; a corroboration, indeed, of no great weight, for he proceeds with equal gravity to relate things which no one will credit; but in this instance his account of the state of Greece gives warranty for his belief, and is itself confirmed by our knowledge of later ages. The passage has often been quoted, but it is striking and to the purpose, and its want of novelty, therefore, shall be no bar to its insertion. "The world at that time brought forth men, which for strongness in their arms, for swiftness of their feet, and for a general strength of the whole body, did far pass the common force of others, and were never weary for any labour or travail they took in hand. But for all this, they never employed these gifts of nature to any honest or profitable thing; but rather delighted villainously to hurt and wrong others; as if all the fruit and profit of their extraordinary strength had consisted in cruelty and violence only, and to be able to keep others under and in subjection; and to force, destroy, and spoil all that came to their hands. Thinking that the more part of those which think it a shame to do ill, and commend justice, equity, and humanity, do it of faint, cowardly hearts, because they dare not wrong others, for fear they should receive wrong themselves; and, therefore, that they which by might could have vantage over others, had nothing to do with such qualities."*

The enormities ascribed to Sinnis and his fellows have discredited the whole train of adventures to which they belong; but this is an untenable ground of doubt. He who reads descriptions of the state of England, before

* We quote here, and in future, from Sir Thomas North's translation, A.D. 1579. North translated from the French of Amyot. His version has been compared with the original, and corrected.

laws were strong enough to control private violence, given by contemporaries who saw what they relate, and whose narratives bear the impress of sincerity, will better appreciate the extent of human ferocity. In the reign of Stephen disorder was at its height. "The barons cruelly oppressed the wretched men of the land with castle-works, and when the castles were made, they filled them with devils and evil men. Then took they those whom they supposed to have any goods, both by night and day, labouring men and women, and threw them into the prison for their gold and silver, and inflicted on them unutterable tortures: for never were any martyrs so tortured as they were. Some they hanged up by the feet, and smoked them with foul smoke, and some by the thumbs, or the head, and hung coats of mail on their feet. They tied knotted cords about their heads, and twisted them until the pain went to their brains. They put them into dungeons where were adders, and snakes, and toads, and so destroyed them. Some they placed in a crucet house; that is, in a chest that was short and narrow, and not deep, wherein they put sharp stones, and so thrust the man therein, that they broke all the limbs. In many of the castles were things loathsome and grim, called Sachenteges, of which two or three men had enough to bear one. They were thus made: they were fastened to a beam, having a sharp iron to go about a man's throat, so that he could in no direction either sit, or lie, or sleep, but bear all that iron. Many thousands they wore out with hunger. I neither can, nor may I tell all the wounds and pains which they inflicted on wretched men in this land."*

"Some, seeing the sweetness of their country turned into bitterness, went into foreign parts: others built hovels about churches in hope of security, and there passed life in fear and pain, subsisting for lack of food (for famine was felt dreadfully over all England) upon the forbidden and unused flesh of dogs and horses, or relieving hunger with raw herbs and roots, until throughout the provinces

* Ingram's Saxon Chronicle.

men, wasted by famine, died in crowds, or went voluntarily with their families into a miserable exile. You might see towns of famous name, standing lonely, and altogether emptied by the death of their inhabitants of all ages and sexes; the fields whitening under a thriving harvest, but the husbandman cut off by pestilential famine ere it ripened: and all England wore the face of grief and calamity, of misery and oppression. In addition to these evils, the savage multitude of barbarians who resorted to England for the gains of warfare was moved neither by the bowels of piety nor by any feeling of human compassion for such misery: everywhere they conspired from their castles to do all wickedness, being always at leisure to rob the poor, to promote quarrels, and intent everywhere upon slaughter with all the malice of a wicked mind." Even churchmen amused themselves with these pastimes. "The bishops themselves, as I am ashamed to say, not all indeed, but many of them, clad in handsome armour, rode up and down on prancing horses with these upsetters of their country; shared in their booty; exposed to fetters, or torture, knights, or any wealthy persons soever, whom they intercepted; and being themselves the head and cause of all this wickedness, they threw the blame not on themselves, but only upon their followers."*

Enough of general descriptions, which are fully borne out by the particulars related. "In the reign of Stephen, Robert, the son of Hubert, had gotten possession of the castle of Devizes. He was a man exceeding all within memory in barbarity and blasphemy, who used freely to make boast, that he had been present when twenty-four monks were burnt together with their church, and profess that he would do as much in England, and ruin utterly the abbey of Malmesbury. If he ever dismissed a prisoner unransomed, and without the torture, which very seldom happened, at such times, when they thanked him in God's name, I have with these ears heard him answer, 'God will never own the obligation to me.' He would expose

* *Gesta Stephani*, ap. Duchesne, *Script. Normann.* p. 961, 2.

his captives naked to the burning sun, 'anointed with honey, to attract flies, and such other tormenting insects.'"* This worthy met with a fit end, being taken and hanged; but this act of retribution was one of illegal violence, being done by a knight who held Marlborough Castle, without a shadow of authority, and apparently on the principle that any one had a right to abate a nuisance.

"In these times (the reign of William Rufus) men come not to great name but by the highest wickedness. Thomas, a great baron near Laudun in France, was great in name, because he was extreme in wickedness. At enmity with the surrounding churches, he had brought all their wealth into his own exchequer. If any one by force or guile were holden in his keeping, truly might that man say, 'the pains of hell got hold upon me.' Murder was his glory and delight. Against all usage, he placed a countess in a dungeon, whom the foul ruffian harassed with fetters and torments to extort money. He would speak words of peace to his neighbour, and stab him to the heart with a smile, and hence, under his cloak, he more often wore his sword naked than sheathed. Therefore, men feared, respected, worshipped him. All through France was he spoken of. Daily did his estate, his treasure, his vassalage increase. Wouldst thou hear the end of this villain? Being stricken with a sword unto death, refusing to repent, and turning away his head from the Lord's body, in such manner he perished: so that it might well be said, 'Befitting to your life was that death.' You have seen Robert de Belesme, a Norman baron, who when established in his castle was Pluto, Megæra, Cerberus, or anything that can be named more dreadful. He took pains not to dismiss, but to dispatch his captives. Pretending to be in play, he put out his son's eyes with his thumbs, while he was muffled up in a cloak; he impaled persons of both sexes. Horrid slaughter was as a meat pleasant to his soul: therefore was he found in all men's mouths, so that the wonderful doings of Robert de Belesme passed into proverbs. Let

* William of Malmesbury, Hist. Novell. lib. ii.

us come at length to the end. He who had afflicted others in prison, being at last thrown into prison by King Henry, ended his wicked life by an enduring punishment.”*

It was this state of disorder which produced knight-errantry, and there is nothing absurd in believing that equal lawlessness in another country was checked by the same sort of interference. The reality of knight-errantry has, indeed, been questioned; it has been pronounced a fiction, suited to the wants of the period in which it was supposed to exist. If this were so, and the tales of Hercules and Theseus equally groundless, it would still be curious to see that men had been led to imagine the same means of making amends for the want of an executive power: but we do not believe this to be the case. The romances gave system and consistency to the scattered acts of individuals; they described the better qualities of knighthood in their own days, and filled up the picture with imaginary virtues and preter-human prowess, attributes which men are always ready to confer on their ancestors, as Nestor makes the heroes with whom he fought in youth far superior to those whom he lectured in old age, and Homer endows those who fought under Troy with the strength of three or four men, “such as mortals now are.” But their productions bear the stamp of copies, not originals, and it is not very easy to believe that they would have invented, or their audience and readers relished, characters and rules of action for which their own experience gave no warrant.

There is, however, a double Theseus, of historic as well as legendary fame. In his latter capacity, both for the degree of reality and the nature of his exploits, he may be compared to Arthur; in his former, still to draw an illustration from British history, he is not unworthy to be placed by the side of Alfred. The union of these two, discordant as it may appear, is not more so than that of the poetic and the historical Theseus. Alfred, indeed, signalised his military talents in many hard-

* Henry of Huntingdon, *De Episcopis sui temporis*.

fought fields, but his victories were those of a general: the exploits of Theseus were those of a knight. But among the mass of stories of questionable truth or unquestioned falsehood relating to him, it is generally acknowledged that this man, whose very existence we might else have doubted, was the author of extensive and judicious reforms in government, such as proved the foundation of Attic greatness: reforms which he effected by the rarest and most virtuous of all sacrifices, the resignation of his own power.* Attica was divided into twelve districts, shires we might call them, except that, taken all together, they were less than one of the larger English counties. Professedly forming one body, and owning a precarious obedience to one prince, they had still their petty and conflicting interests, and could with difficulty be induced to concur in any measures for the benefit of the whole. Theseus, encouraged by the popularity which he had gained by delivering Athens from its subjection to Crete,† undertook to substitute a better polity. "He went through the several towns, and persuaded the inhabitants to give up their separate councils and magistrates, and submit to a common jurisdiction. Every man was to retain his dwelling and his property as before; but justice was to be administered and all public business transacted at Athens. The mass of the people came into his measures, and to subdue the reluctance of the powerful, who were loath to resign the importance accruing from the local magistracies, he gave up much of his own authority, reserving only the command of the army, and the care of watching over the execution of the laws. Opposition was silenced by his liberality, together with the fear of his power, ability, and courage, and the union of Attica was effected

* Perhaps this is too positively asserted. No doubt exists as to the political operation, but it has been questioned whether Theseus had a more real existence than the other heroes who gave their names to, or were named after, the several Athenian tribes. See Arnold's *Thucyd.*, Appendix II.

† History of Greece, p. 5.

by him and made lasting. To bind it closer, without disturbing the religious observances of the several towns, he instituted a common festival in honour of Minerva, which was called the feast of union, and (*Panathenæa*) the feast of all the Athenians.”*

This process bears some resemblance to the consolidation of the Saxon Heptarchy, nominally effected by Egbert, but completed and made truly beneficial by Alfred. The evils which were to be reformed were very different in the two cases: at Athens civil dissension was to be remedied; in England a rude people, intermixed with foreign barbarians more ferocious than themselves, and reduced to poverty by a series of destructive invasions, required a strong curb for the re-establishment of order and security. We must not expect, therefore, to find any resemblance between their institutions: the Saxons required no measures to prevent civil war, and inspire a spirit of nationality; the Athenians, though well inclined to civil broils, respected, from the earliest dawn of history, the security of property, and in consequence far outstripped the rest of Greece in wealth and refinement. Nevertheless the names of these princes may fairly be selected to adorn the same page: both advanced beyond their age in legislative and political science; both directed their wisdom, power, and popularity to truly noble ends; and therefore merit the respect of all who believe rank and office to have been instituted for other ends than for the advantage of those who possess them.

We have spoken of Hercules and Theseus as indicating the commencement of Grecian history. Previous to them, facts are mentioned which we have no ground to disbelieve, as the various settlements by Phœnician or Egyptian emigrants; but all further particulars of these persons, with the exception of Minos, are of such a nature, that where we find no internal evidence to pronounce them fabulous we can yet assign but scanty reasons for relying confidently upon their truth. But about this era our

* History of Greece, p. 6.

knowledge begins to increase. We must refer to it an event of which it is not easy to fix the date with certainty; namely, the celebrated Argonautic expedition, in which both these heroes are said to have joined: a statement, however, irreconcilable with the accounts of Theseus' introduction to Ægeus, and the plot formed against him by Medea.* Without troubling ourselves to account for these discrepancies, it is evident that the expedition, if it ever took place, which there seems reason to believe in spite of Bryant's opposition, who would ascribe this, and almost all other legends, to some faint traditions of the deluge and preservation of Noah, must have borne a close resemblance to the Danish piratical excursions which we have already described. Not long after occurs the first confederate war mentioned in Grecian history, that of the Seven against Thebes;† an event so closely connected with mythology that its reality might reasonably be questioned, but for the testimony of Homer and Hesiod. The revolting nature of the struggle between two brothers, for the kingdom of a banished, miserable, and neglected father, would incline us indeed to give as little credit to the concluding tragedy of the house of Laius, as to the series of crimes and misery by which that house had been polluted: but all arguments founded upon the horrors of such fratricidal warfare fall to the ground, when in the brightest period of chivalry we find it revived with no less rancour, and

* The arrival of Theseus at Athens roused Medea's jealousy, and she proposed to poison him. She did not arrive at Athens until some time after she had reached Greece with Jason and the Argonauts; while the journey of Theseus from Træzen to Athens appears to have been his first exploit. Either, therefore, Theseus was not an Argonaut, or this charge against Medea is ungrounded.

† Eteocles and Polynices, the sons of Œdipus, agreed, after the expulsion of their father, to reign alternate years in Thebes. Eteocles, however, at the end of the first year, refused to surrender his power, upon which Polynices laid siege to the city, assisted by six other princes. The brothers met in battle, and fell by each other's hands.

a no less fatal end, and the flower of French knighthood a calm spectator, nay, almost an actor in the scene. The strife between Don Pedro of Castile, and his brother Henry of Trastámara, the deadly struggle in which Pedro, who had already slain one brother, fell, when defeated and a prisoner, by the dagger of another against whom his own hand was armed, involve circumstances of horror scarce less adapted to dramatic effect than those legends which have so often employed the Greek tragedians.

Don Pedro was the legitimate heir to the crown of Castile. Don Henry and Don Fadrique (or Frederick) were his half-brothers by Donna Leonora de Guzman, whom their father had entertained as his mistress, and even proclaimed queen, during the life-time of his lawful wife. When Pedro succeeded to the throne, at his mother's instigation he put her rival to death: his brothers, Henry and Fadrique, escaped, and the former renounced his allegiance: the latter fled into Portugal; but after some time he made his peace, returned, and was appointed master of the order of St. Iago. When several months had elapsed, he was invited to join the court at Seville; and take his share in the amusements of an approaching tournament. He accepted the invitation, but was sternly and ominously received, and immediately executed within the palace. The friends of Pedro asserted, that the king had, that very day, detected Don Fadrique in a correspondence with his brother Henry and the Arragonese; while popular belief attributed the slaughter of the master to the influence of Pedro's mistress, Maria de Padilla. The circumstances of this event are powerfully described in one of the Spanish ballads, so admirably translated by Mr. Lockhart. There is a peculiarity of construction in the ballad, the person of the narrator being changed in the course of it. It is commenced by the victim himself, who describes the alacrity with which he obeyed his brother's summons.

I sat alone in Coimbra—the town myself had ta'en,—
 When came into my chamber a messenger from Spain :
 There was no treason in his look, an honest look he wore,
 I from his hand the letter took—my brother's seal it bore.

“Come, brother dear, the day draws near ('twas thus bespoke
 the king)

For plenary court and nightly sport, within the listed ring.”
 Alas, unhappy master, I easy credence lent :
 Alas, for fast and faster I at his bidding went.

When I set out from Coimbra, and passed the bounds of
 Spain;

I had a goodly company of spearmen in my train ;
 A gallant force, a score of horse, and sturdy mules thirteen ;
 With joyful heart I held my course, my years were young
 and green.

A journey of good fifteen days within the week was done,
 I halted not, though signs I got, dark tokens many a one ;
 A strong stream mastered horse and mule, I lost a poniard
 fine,

And left a page within the pool, a faithful page of mine.

Yet on to proud Seville I rode—when to the gate I came,
 Before it stood a man of God to warn me from the same :
 The words he spake I would not hear, his grief I would
 not see ;

“I seek,” I said, “my brother dear—I will not stop for thee.”

No lists were closed upon the sand, for royal tourney dight,
 No pawing horse was seen to stand, I saw no armed knight :
 Yet aye I gave my mule the spur, and hasted through the
 town,

I stopt before his palace-door, then gaily leapt I down.

They shut the door—my trusty score of friends were left
 behind ;

I would not hear their whispered fear, no harm was in my
 mind ;

I greeted Pedro, but he turned—I wot his look was cold ;
 His brother from his knee he spurned—“Stand off, thou mas-
 ter bold.

“Stand off, stand off, thou traitor strong !” 'twas thus he sai
 to me,

“Thy time on earth shall not be long—what brings thee to
 my knee ?

My lady craves a new year's gift, and I will keep my word;
Thy head methinks may serve the shift—good yeoman, draw
thy sword—”

The master lay upon the floor, ere well that word was said,
Then in a charger off they bore his pale and bloody head.
They brought it to Padilla's chair, they bowed them on the
knee—

“King Pedro greets thee, lady fair, his gift he sends to thee.”

She gazed upon the master's head, her scorn it could not
scare,
And cruel were the words she spoke, and proud her glances
were.

“Thou now shalt pay, thou traitor base, the debt of many a
year,
My dog shall lick that haughty face, no more that lip shall
sneer.”

She seized it by the clotted hair, and o'er the window flung:
The mastiff smelt it in his lair, forth at her cry he sprung;
The mastiff that had crouched so low, to lick the master's
hand,

He tossed the morsel to and fro, and licked it on the sand.

And ever as the mastiff tore, his bloody teeth were shown,
With growl and snort he made his sport, and picked it to the
bone!

The baying of the beast was loud; and swiftly on the street
There gathered round a gaping crowd to see the mastiff eat.

Then out and spake King Pedro—“What governance is this?
The rabble rout the gate without torment my dogs, I wiss.”

Then out and spake King Pedro's page—“It is the master's
head,

The mastiff tears it in his rage, therewith they have him
fed.”

Then out and spake the ancient nurse, that nursed the bro-
thers twain—

“On thee, King Pedro, lies the curse; thy brother thou hast
slain;

A thousand harlots there may be within the realms of Spain,
But where is she can give to thee thy brother back again?”

Came darkness o'er King Pedro's brow, when thus he heard
her say;

He sorely rued the accursed vow he had fulfilled that day;

He passed unto his paramour, where on her couch she lay.

Leaning from out her painted bower, to see the mastiff's play.

He drew her to a dungeon dark, a dungeon strong and deep ;
" My father's son lies stiff and stark, and there are few to weep.

Fadrique's blood for vengeance calls, his cry is in mine ear ;

Thou art the cause, thou harlot false ; in darkness lie thou here."

After Pedro had alienated his people's hearts by his cruelty, Don Henry returned with a formidable body of French auxiliaries. At first the fortune of the rightful owner of the throne, who was supported by Edward the Black Prince, prevailed, and the invader was obliged to retire back to France : but suddenly renewing the attack, assisted by Du Guesclin, the flower of French knight-hood, after the English auxiliaries had quitted Spain, he defeated and took prisoner his brother. Upon entering the chamber where he was confined, Henry exclaimed, " Where is that whoreson and Jew, who calls himself King of Castile ?" Pedro, as proud and fearless as he was cruel, stepped instantly forward, and replied, " Here I stand, the lawful son and heir of Don Alphonso, and it is thou that art but a false bastard." The rival brothers instantly grappled like lions ; the French knights, and Du Guesclin himself, looking on. Henry drew his poniard, and wounded Pedro in the face, but his body was protected by a coat of mail. A violent struggle ensued. Henry fell across a bench, and his brother, being uppermost, had well nigh mastered him, when one of Henry's followers seizing Don Pedro by the leg, turned him over, and his master thus at length gaining the upper hand, instantly stabbed the king to the heart. Menard, in his history of Du Guesclin, says that, while all around gazed like statues on the furious struggle of the brothers, Du Guesclin exclaimed to this attendant of Henry, " What ! will you stand by, and see your

master placed at such a pass by a false renegade? Make forward and help him, for well you may.”*

At Athens, the poets who contended for the tragic prize, were expected to exhibit three pieces, which, from their number, were called collectively a trilogy, together with a fourth, satirical, drama, which came last in the order of representation, like our farces now. Often they chose for the argument of these tragedies different events in the same story, so that the three formed a connected whole: of which an instance, the only instance extant, remains in the *Agamemnon*, *Choephoroi*, and *Eumenides* of *Æschylus*. The tale which has just been narrated is well fitted for this kind of representation, and would furnish materials not unworthy even of that poet's genius. In the first play we may imagine an insulted queen and deserted wife, brooding over past injuries, rejoicing in the prospect of revenge, and urging the savage temper of her son to seek it in the blood of those who should have been dearest to him; the play terminating with the death of *Leonora de Guzman*, and the escape of her sons, preserved, like *Orestes*, to be at once the ministers of vengeance and the instruments of further crime. For the second the unsuspecting confidence of *Don Fadrique*, his rejection of the signs and warnings, which were offered in vain, and the successful machinations of a wicked, perhaps a rejected woman, acting upon the proud and cruel *Pedro*, are well suited; while the chorus would find a fitting part, at first, in dark and indistinct presages of evil, and lamentations over the blindness with which the fated victim rushed into the snare; and at the end, in indignant description of the circumstances of horror narrated in the ballad, and in joining the aged nurse to bewail the death of her foster son, and denouncing vengeance upon the murderer's head. The third would contain the capture of *Pedro*, the mutual defiance and death-struggle of the brothers, and the barbarous exposure by *Henry* of his brother's corpse: while at the end the impression of these horrors might be relieved by

* Lockhart's Spanish Ballads.

the constant love of Maria de Padilla, who, now neglected and despised, still watched over the forsaken body of her monarch and lover, with a fidelity worthy of a purer bosom.*

We reach at length the Trojan war, the point assumed

* See a subsequent ballad in the same collection:—

In her hot cheek the blood mounts high, as she stands
gazing down

Now on proud Henry's royal state, his robe and golden
crown,

And now upon the trampled cloak, that hides not from
her view

The slaughtered Pedro's marble brow, and lips of livid
hue.

Away she flings her garments, her brodered veil and
vest,

As if they should behold her love within her lovely
breast—

As if to call upon her foes the constant heart to see
Where Pedro's form is still enshrined, and evermore
shall be.

But none on fair Maria looks, by none her breast is seen,
Save angry heaven, remembering well the murder of the
Queen;

The wounds of jealous harlot rage, which virgin blood
must staunch,

And all the scorn that mingled in the bitter cup of Blanch.

The utter coldness of neglect that haughty spirit stings,
As if ten thousand fiends were there, with all their
flapping wings.

She wraps the veil about her head, as if 'twere all a
dream,

The love—the murder—and the wrath—and that rebel-
lious scream.

For still there's shouting on the plain, and spurring far
and nigh;

"God save the King—Amen! Amen! King Henry!"
is the cry,

While Pedro all alone is left upon his bloody bier—

Not one remains to cry to God, "Our Lord lies mur-
dered here."

by Thucydides for the commencement of his sketch of Grecian history : a circumstance alone sufficient to discredit the scepticism of those who believe it to be a mere fabulous legend. The universal voice of antiquity testifies to its reality, and we know not of any arguments strong enough to shake this testimony. Herodotus, on the authority of the Persians, mentions the Rape of Helen as one of a series of reprisals consequent upon the aggression of the Phœnicians, who carried off Io ; the cause and commencement of hostility between the Greeks and the Asiatic nations. The former were clearly in the wrong, in the opinion of the Persians, both because the rape of Helen only balanced accounts, and because the Greeks made such injuries a ground for war. " Up to that time they confined themselves to mutual depredations ; but the Greeks set the example of carrying war from one continent to the other. Now, to carry off women is the act of rogues ; but to be over eager to avenge their loss is the part of fools ; and wise men will take no thought for them after they are gone : for it is plain that they would not have been run away with, except with their own good will. And in truth, say the Persians, the Asiatics made no account of the carrying off their women : but the Greeks collected a mighty armament on account of a Lacedæmonian female, and then came to Asia, to pull down the empire of Priam ! " * So thought the Persians. Herodotus confesses that he is not prepared to say how these things took place, and sets us the example of hastening to ground which he can tread with some certainty. That there is no intrinsic improbability in the story, has already been asserted by Mitford, on the ground of its close analogy to an incident in the history of the British islands.

Dermod Mac Morough (or Mac Murchad), prince of

* Herod. i. 4. It may be inferred from hence that the high estimation of female chastity, and implacable resentment consequent upon injuries in that respect, which now characterise Eastern manners, did not prevail in the age of Herodotus. That these feelings did prevail at a very remote period, appears from the story of Darius and Alexander.

Leinster, was attached to Dervorghal, wife of Tiernan O'Ruark, another Irish chief, who held the county of Leitrim, with some adjacent districts,—a lady of great beauty, but small virtue, who took advantage of her husband's being driven into hiding by O'Connor, who was then predominant in Ireland, to elope with her lover. "An outrage of this kind was not always regarded with abhorrence by the Irish; they considered it rather as an act of pardonable gallantry, or such an offence as a reasonable pecuniary compensation might atone for. But the sullen and haughty prince, provoked more by the insolence and treachery of his ravisher than the infidelity of his wife, conceived the most determined animosity against Dermot. He practised secretly with O'Connor, promised the most inviolable attachment to his interest, and prevailed on him, not only to reinstate him in his possessions, but to revenge the insult of Mac Morough, whom he represented, and justly, as a faithless vassal, really devoted to the service of his rival. The King of Connaught led his forces into Leinster, rescued Dervorghal from her paramour, and restored her to her friends; with whom she lived, if not in a state of reconciliation with her husband, at least in that opulence and splendour which enabled her to atone for the crime of infidelity, by the usual method of magnificent donations to the church."* This domestic squabble led to more than usually important results, for the expelled Dermot applied to our Henry II. for assistance, and the conquest of Ireland followed.

The ambition of Agamemnon, however, is regarded by Thucydides as the cause of the war; the abduction of Helen served only as the pretext. "To me it seemeth that Agamemnon got together that fleet, not so much for that he had with him the suitors of Helena, bound thereto by oath to Tyndareus, as for that he exceeded the rest in power. For Atreus, after that Eurystheus was slain by the Heraclidæ, obtained the kingdom of Mycenæ, and whatever else had been under him, for himself. To which greatness Agamemnon succeeding, and also far excelling

* Leland's Hist. Ireland.

the rest in shipping, took that war in hand, as I conceive it, and assembled the said forces, not so much on favour as by fear. For it is clear, that he himself both conferred most ships to that action, and that some also he lent to the Arcadians. And this is likewise confirmed by Homer, (if any think his testimony sufficient), who, at the delivery of the sceptre unto him, calleth him, 'Of many isles, and of all Argos king.' " * Argos here signifies the whole peninsula, called afterwards Peloponnesus. It is plain, however, from Homer, that the sovereignty here ascribed to him was of a most uncertain and insecure tenure; that his subordinate princes were in fact independent within their own dominions, and were too high spirited and powerful to be maltreated with impunity. Altogether, without the elaborate machinery of the feudal system, the power and influence of Agamemnon seem to have resembled that possessed by the kings of France, and emperors of Germany, over those great vassals who held whole provinces, and singly or united often proved an overmatch for their sovereign.

Here ends the Mythic age. We shall pass over the next three, or according to most chronologers the next five centuries, which are but partially filled up by notices of events, such as the return of the Heraclidæ, the gradual subversion of monarchy throughout Greece, and the great emigrations which peopled the Asiatic coast with a Hellenic race. About the sixth century B.C. we begin to reap the benefit of contemporary authorities; and thenceforward history, if not free from an admixture of fiction, at least runs with a copious and uninterrupted stream.

* Thucyd. i. 9.



CHAPTER II.

Aristomenes.*—Hereward le Wake.—Wallace.

SPARTA had not long acquired strength under the institutions of Lycurgus, before she discovered that thirst of dominion which distinguished her, after-history. The neighbouring state of Messenia was the first to suffer. As usual, it is hard to say which party gave the first provocation; but if the Lacedæmonians were ever in the right, they lost that advantage when, in time of peace, with studied secrecy they bound themselves never to return home until Messenia was conquered; and when, without the formality of a declaration of war, they stormed by night Ampheia, a frontier town, and put the unprepared inhabitants to the sword. Their enterprise succeeded better than its iniquity merited; for after a vigorous and protracted defence Messenia was subdued, and continued in servitude for forty years. At the end of that time a new race had grown up, ignorant of the evils of war, and too high-spirited to bear their degradation tamely. A gallant leader is seldom wanting to gallant men engaged in a good cause; and Aristomenes might serve as a type for all later heroes, whose exploits

* Pausanias evidently founded his account of Aristomenes upon the traditions and legendary ballads of the Messenians; which, probably, were about as historical as Chevy Chase, or the Spanish ballads of the Cid, and other celebrated warriors. The reader will be on his guard, therefore, against taking all that is here told for veracious history: but we have not attempted to discriminate accurately between truth and fiction, which would entirely destroy the spirit and romance of the narrative, very probably without coming nearer to the reality.

belong to the debateable ground which lies between truth and fiction. He was a young Messenian of the royal line, according to the report of his countrymen ; but other Greeks, with a more unbounded admiration, related that the hero Pyrrhus,* son of Achilles, was his father. His valour, at least, did not disgrace his reputed parentage ; and, though daring in extremity even to desperation, was not of that blind and foolish kind which hurries unprepared into action, and sacrifices a good cause to the vanity and temerity of its supporters. Before taking the field, he secured the co-operation of Argos and Arcadia, to support and strengthen the eager spirit of his countrymen, and then, with a force entirely Messenian, attacked the Lacedæmonians at a place called Deræ. The event was doubtful ; but that a conquered people should meet its masters in battle, and part from them on equal terms, was in itself equivalent to a victory. Aristomenes is said to have performed deeds beyond human prowess, and was rewarded by his grateful countrymen with a summons to the vacant throne. He declined the dignity, but accepted of the power under the title of commander-in-chief.

His next exploit was of a singular and romantic cast, such as would befit a knight of the court of Arthur, or

* Pausanias merely says that the Greeks in general believed Pyrrhus to be his father. We have no doubt, from the context, that the hero is the person meant, though the passage has been otherwise interpreted. The practice of deifying eminent men prevailed in Greece at an early period, though apparently not in the age of Hesiod and Homer. Homer is fond indeed of dwelling on the superiority of the past ; a superiority referred to the celestial descent of the heroes who then flourished ; but he gives us no reason to think that divine honours were paid them. In later times, a patron hero was as necessary to a Grecian, as a patron saint formerly to a European city : and there are few names of eminence in the heroic age, in honour of which temples have not been built, and sacred rites instituted. The twelve Athenian tribes had each its protecting hero : Æacus and his descendants were believed to preside over Ægina and Salamis. It is needless to multiply examples.

Charlemagne, or the less fabulous, but scarce less romantic era of Froissart, better than it assorts with modern notions of a general's or a sovereign's duties. Considering it important to alarm the Spartans, and impress them with a formidable idea of his personal qualities, he traversed Laconia, and entered Sparta by night, which, in obedience to Lycurgus' precepts, was unwall'd and unguarded, to suspend from the temple of Pallas a shield, inscribed "Aristomenes from the Spartan spoils dedicates this to the goddess."* Violence was not offered, and his object,

* Probably this story is founded on the theft of the Palladium by night from Troy, by Ulysses and Diomed. A similar spirit of chivalrous daring, mingled with superstition, suggested a similar enterprise to Fernando Perez del Pulgar, surnamed 'of the Exploits,' when serving at the siege of Granada under Ferdinand of Castile. "Who will stand by me," said he, "in an enterprise of desperate peril?" The Christian cavaliers well knew the hair-brained valour of del Pulgar, yet not one hesitated to step forward. He chose fifteen companions, all men of powerful arm and dauntless heart. In the dead of the night he led them forth from the camp, and approached the city cautiously, until he arrived at a postern gate, which opened upon the Darro, and was guarded by foot soldiers. The guards, little thinking of such an unwonted and partial attack, were for the most part fast asleep. The gate was forced, and a confused and chance medley skirmish ensued. Fernando stopped not to take part in the affray. Putting spurs to his horse, he galloped furiously through the streets, striking fire out of the stones at every bound. Arrived at the principal mosque, he sprang from his horse, and kneeling at the portal, took possession of the edifice as a Christian chapel, dedicating it to the blessed Virgin. In testimony of the ceremony, he took a tablet, which he had brought with him, on which was inscribed, in large letters, Ave Maria, and nailed it to the door of the mosque with his dagger. This done, he remounted his steed, and galloped back to the gate. The alarm had been given, the city was in an uproar; soldiers were gathering from every direction. They were astonished at seeing a Christian warrior speeding from the interior of the city. Fernando, overturning some and cutting down others, rejoined his companions, who still maintained possession of the gate by dint

therefore, must have been to win her favour, or at least to alarm the Spartans, lest their protecting deity should be wiled away. It is to be wished that we knew the result of this exploit, of which, unfortunately, no account remains. The year after the battle at Deræ, he again led his countrymen, supported by their allies, into battle, at a place called the Boar's Tomb; and if upon this occasion fortune favoured the rightful cause, it was again mainly owing to his personal exertions. Supported by a chosen band of eighty men, who gloried in the privilege of risking their lives by the side of Aristomenes, he attacked and broke in detail the choice infantry of Sparta, committing to others the task of routing a disordered enemy, himself ever present where they showed the firmest front; till the Lacedæmonians forgot the precepts of their lawgiver in a hasty flight. Their disorder was complete, but the pursuit was early stopped, either by the prudence of Aristomenes, or the promptitude with which the Spartans availed themselves of local advantages. The latter is probably the real meaning of the following legend. There lay a wild pear-tree in the track of the retreating army; Theoclus, the Messenian seer, warned Aristomenes not to urge the pursuit beyond this tree, for that Castor and Pollux, the tutelary deities of Lacedæmon, were perched upon it. But Aristomenes thought as little of his friend's advice, as Hector of Polydamas's warning not to attack the Grecian camp, and was still hard pressing upon the enemy, when suddenly his shield disappeared. The loss of this weapon was esteemed disgraceful, and therefore we can scarcely wonder that even

of hard fighting, and they all made good their retreat to the camp. The Moors were at a loss to conjecture the meaning of this wild and apparently fruitless assault, but great was their exasperation when, on the following day, they discovered the trophy of hardihood and prowess, the Ave Maria, thus elevated in the very centre of the city. The mosque, thus boldly sanctified by Fernando Perez del Pulgar, was eventually, after the capture of Granada, converted into a cathedral.—*Washington Irving, Chronicle of the Conquest of Granada*, chap. 91.

Aristomenes, whose character stood above detraction, should have lost time in a fruitless search, which, if improved to the full, might have broken for ever the power of his country's oppressor. So great was the loss and dismay of Sparta, that the war was kept alive with difficulty, and that only through the influence acquired by Tyrtaeus, who devoted his poetical talents to recruiting the courage and exasperating the hatred of the Lacedæmonians.*

The history of this man is somewhat singular. At the beginning of the war, the Lacedæmonians had been directed by the Delphic oracle to send to Athens for an adviser: they did so, and the city, unwilling either to aid in the aggrandizement of a rival, or to disobey the god, thought to extricate itself from the dilemma by making choice of one Tyrtaeus, an obscure schoolmaster, halt of one leg, and esteemed to be of mean ability. From the event, a Grecian would have argued in support of the favourite doctrine, that the decrees of fate were inevitable; for to the unknown talents of one so lightly valued did Sparta, upon this and other occasions, owe the favourable issue of the war.

But the reader may be curious to know the fate of Aristomenes' shield. Applying at Delphi, he was informed that he would find it in the cave of Trophonius,† at Lebadeia, in Boeotia, where he afterwards dedicated it,

* The spirit-stirring strains, which are said to have produced so wonderful an effect, are the dullest longs and shorts that ever were coupled together, if they are the same which have reached us under Tyrtaeus's name.

† A celebrated oracle; those who entered the cave are commonly said never to have smiled again. It appears, however, from Pausanias, that this loss of the important faculty which is said to distinguish men from brutes was only temporary. The method of consulting the oracle was singular. The aspirant descended into a cave, where was a small crevice, into which he proceeded to insinuate himself feet foremost. So soon as he had got his knees in, the whole body was sucked forwards by an overpowering force, and after passing through the circuit of the mysteries, he was ejected, feet foremost, at the place where he had entered.

"and I myself have seen it there,"* adds Pausanias, lest any doubt should attach to a story which seems to border somewhat on the marvellous. How it came there, we are left to conjecture: and in these days of scepticism and research, may well envy the historian whose readers' incredulity was so easily overcome. But, with one or two brilliant exceptions, it was sufficient for the Greeks that a story passed current; they cared little to investigate probabilities, or enter upon long and intricate inquiries, which in modern times have been so successfully employed in disentangling the mingled web of truth and fiction. It is curious to mark the importance attached to this miraculous loss. Aristomenes thought it of sufficient consequence to render necessary an immediate journey to Delphi; for we find that, returning from Lebadeia, he renewed the war with his recovered shield, which therefore must have been dedicated at a later period. At first he confined himself to predatory incursions. Returning from "driving a creagh," in Laconia, he was attacked and wounded, but repelled the assailants; and, on his recovery, projected an attack upon Sparta, which, under such a leader, might have been fatal to an unfortified and unwatched city; but was deterred a second time by the interposition of Castor and Pollux. Turning aside, therefore, to Caryä, he carried off a band of Spartan maidens while engaged in a religious ceremony; and on this occasion he showed that a life of warfare had not deadened the kindlier feelings of his heart, by protecting them from the drunken intemperance of his soldiers, even to the death of some who persisted

* *Cade.* The elder of them, being put to nurse,
Was by a beggar-woman stolen away:
And, ignorant of his birth and parentage,
Became a bricklayer, when he came to age.
His son am I; deny it if you can.

Smith. Sir, he made a chimney in my father's house,
and the bricks are alive to this day to testify it; therefore deny it not.

Henry VI. Part 2, Act iv., sc. 2.

in their disobedience. The captives, according to the custom of the age, were released upon ransom.

Another adventure terminated less happily, in which he attacked a quantity of matrons employed in celebrating the rites of Ceres, with similar views, but with a very different result. Armed only with spits and the implements of sacrifice, they showed the value of their Spartan breeding, animated by religious enthusiasm, in the entire defeat of the marauding party. Aristomenes, beaten down with their torches, was taken prisoner. This might have been an awkward and ill-sounding termination to a life of lofty adventure: many a hero has fallen victim to female wiles; but to be overcome and captured in open war by women armed with spits and staves, is an event not to be matched since the days of the Amazons, either in history or romance. The usual course of events, indeed, was inverted; for love was his deliverer from the dangers in which valour had involved him. Archidamia, the priestess of the goddess, who had been previously enamoured of him, forgot her patriotism, and set him free.

The Arcadians were zealous in the Messenian cause. Unhappily their prince, Aristocrates, proved treacherous, and took bribes from Sparta to betray his trust. "For the Lacedæmonians gave the first example of setting warlike prowess up to sale: prior to the transgression of Lacedæmon, and the treason of Aristocrates, combatants referred their cause to the arbitration of valour, and the fortune which Providence should allot to them. So also did they bribe the Athenian generals at Ægos-Potami:* but in the end the poisoned shaft recoiled upon themselves. It was through Persian gold, distributed at Corinth, Argos, Athens, Thebes, that the victorious career of Lacedæmon was stopped at its height, when, the Athenian fleet being destroyed, and a large part of Asia delivered, Agesilaus was compelled by the disturbances of Greece to lead home his victorious army. Thus

* We by no means pledge ourselves to the truth of this piece of secret history, which is not supported by the testimony of earlier authors.

did the gods turn to their own ruin the fraud which the Lacedæmonians had devised."* Aristocrates kept his own counsel, until the eve of the battle of Megaletaphrus (the great ditch), and then disseminated an opinion among his countrymen that their position was bad, and offered no means of retreat if they were worsted; and, moreover, that the omens were unfavourable: finally, he advised all to betake themselves to flight, so soon as he should give the word. The Arcadians were steady friends to the Messenians, yet, strange to say, they became the abettors of their prince's baseness, without sharing his reward. They formed the centre and left wing, and the consternation of the Messenians may be imagined, when two-thirds of their army at once deserted them. To complete his treachery, Aristocrates led the flying troops through the Messenians, and threw them into irretrievable confusion; forgetful of the battle, they betook themselves to expostulation and upbraiding of their treacherous allies; and the Lacedæmonians readily surrounded and defeated them with such slaughter, that from the hope of becoming lords of their former masters, they were reduced even to despair of safety. Aristomenes collected from all quarters the scattered remnant of his countrymen, into one new city which he founded on Mount Eira.

By this step they gave up all their territory, except a strip along the coast held by the Pylians and Methonæans. But they were not men to starve peaceably in the neighbourhood of full garners,

For why, the good old rule
Contented them; the simple plan
That they should take, who have the power,
And they should keep, who can:

and in truth circumstances fully justified them in adopting this simple and compendious rule of action, which they followed with no ordinary success, carrying off corn, wine, and cattle, equally from their own country, now occupied by Lacedæmonians, and from Laconia; and

* Pausanias, iv. 17.

providing for their other wants with the ransoms paid for men and moveables captured in their predatory excursions. At last the Spartans found out that it was worse than lost labour to sow, where an enemy was to reap ; and forbade the cultivation, not only of Messenia, but even of the borders of Laconia. So great a sacrifice bespeaks the formidable nature of the enemy, and produced disturbances, in appeasing which the value of Tyrtæus was again displayed. The measure was highly politic, for it compelled the Messenians to gain their livelihood by long and dangerous excursions. In one of these Aristomenes, being surprised by a superior force, was stunned by a blow, and taken, with fifty of his comrades. Cruelty is almost the necessary consequence of injustice ; and though the Messenians, and especially Aristomenes, seem always to have treated their prisoners with humanity, it was resolved to insure future quiet by sacrificing a man whose only crime was perseverance in his country's cause. The Spartans executed criminals by throwing them into a deep pit, called Cæda : into this Aristomenes and his companions were precipitated. All, except the hero, were killed by the fall, and he, reserved apparently for a more dreadful fate, retired to the extremity of the cavern, and for three days sat, his head wrapped in his cloak, in patient expectation of a lingering and painful death. At the end of that time he heard a slight noise, and raising his head (his eyes by this time had become accustomed to the gloom) perceived a fox gnawing the dead bodies. It might have occurred to a less ready wit, that where there is an entrance there may also be a way out ; he caught the fox, and allowing it to follow its own path without suffering it to escape, was led along a dark passage, terminating in a crevice just large enough to admit the animal, through which a glimmering of light appeared. Dismissing his guide uninjured, he enlarged the opening with his hands, and against hope even, as well as probability, stood once more free to vindicate his country. It was of course supposed that a special providence, on this as on other occasions, guarded his safety ; and many,

to magnify the wonder, asserted that an eagle interposed itself in the fall, and bore him down secure from all harm.

The whole event was considered marvellous: first, such was his lofty spirit, and renown in arms, that none believed Aristomenes would be taken alive; but his return from the bowels of the earth was still more amazing, and was held to be a manifest interposition of the Deity. The Lacedæmonians, indeed, refused to believe it, until the total destruction of a body of Corinthians marching to assist in the siege of Eira, "convinced them that Aristomenes, and no other of the Messenians, had done this."

After this occurrence he performed a second time a rite peculiar to the Messenians, called Hecatomphonia; a sacrifice offered to the Ithomæan* Jupiter, by such as had slain a hundred men in battle. He had celebrated it for the first time after the battle at the Boar's Tomb; the slaughter of the Corinthians gave him a second opportunity; and he is said to have offered it yet a third time. The Lacedæmonians now concluded a truce for forty days, that they might go home, to celebrate one of their great annual festivals. Aristomenes wandering abroad without suspicion during its continuance, was seized by seven Cretan bowmen, who, while the Spartans were feasting, amused themselves by traversing the country. Two of them set off to bear the news to Sparta: the others carried him to a neighbouring village, in which a girl dwelt, who, in a dream in the preceding night, had seen a lion brought thither in bonds, and deprived of claws, by wolves. She loosed it, the claws returned, and it destroyed its captors. When Aristomenes was brought in, and she heard his name, the interpretation of the dream flashed across her mind. She intoxicated the soldiers, and set him free; the treacherous Cretans fell an easy prey. In recompence for his life, he gave his preserver in marriage to his son Gorgus.

* Ithome was a strong town on Mount Ithome, now Vourkan, in which the Messenians made their last stand in the first war.

Such was the fortune of the war for ten years. After the destructive battle at Megaletaphrus, in the third year, when their cause was ruined by the defection of the Arcadians, Aristomenes and the seer Theoclus consulted the Delphic oracle concerning the fate of their country. The answer ran thus—

When the he-goat shall bend to drink where dimpling
Neda flows,
Messene's fate draws nigh; no more can I avert her woes.

In the eleventh year of the siege of Eira, the fourteenth of the war, Theoclus, while walking along the bank of the river Neda, observed a wild fig-tree, which in the Messenian tongue was called by the same word which signifies a he-goat, that had grown slanting out of the bank, and then just swept the water with its branches. He brought Aristomenes to the place, and they agreed that the prophecy had received its fulfilment, and the hope of the nation was at an end. There were certain objects preserved in secret, and invested with peculiar sanctity, such as the Palladium enjoyed in Troy. If these were lost, the fortune of Messenia sunk with them for ever; if not, ancient oracles foretold that the Messenians should again enjoy their own. Believing that the fated time had arrived, Aristomenes buried secretly the mystic treasure in the wildest and most desolate part of Mount Ithome; in the persuasion that the deities, who had till then supported them in a righteous struggle, would still watch over the mysterious pledge of their safety.*

Pausanias seems to take a malicious pleasure in observing that Eira, no less than Troy, owed its ruin to a woman. A herdsman, belonging to Emperamus, a Spartan of distinction, had fled from his master, and

* When the Messenians were restored by Epaminondas, the locality of this deposit was indicated by a dream. It was found to consist of a tin plate beaten thin, and folded into the shape of a book, upon which were engraved the rites and doctrines of the Eleusinian mysteries.—*Pausanias*, iv. 26.

lived near the river Neda. He gained the affections of a Messenian woman, who dwelt without the walls of Eira, and used to visit her when her husband was on guard. One night, the husband's sudden return compelled him to conceal himself: a storm of extraordinary violence had caused the guard to disperse, trusting that the inclement season would keep the Lacedæmonians quiet, and aware that Aristomenes could not go the rounds, according to his custom, since he was lying ill of a recent wound. The herdsman listened to this account, and perceived that it was a favourable opportunity for making his peace, and even securing reward. He hastened to Emperamus, his master, who was in command at the camp, narrated what had happened, and conducted the army to the assault. The way was difficult, and the night terrible, but they surmounted these impediments, and entered the town before the alarm was given. Taken by surprise, its devoted inhabitants still acted up to the reputation they had so deservedly acquired. Aristomenes and Theoclus, aware that Messenia at length must fall, yet concealed the fulfilment of the oracle, and roused the courage of their comrades to desperation: even the women showed that they preferred death to captivity, and excited the men to higher daring by the participation of their danger. The night passed without advantage to either party, but at day-break the rain poured down in still greater fury, and drove in the faces of the Messenians; and the lightning flashing from the left, an evil omen, at once blinded them and depressed their spirits, while to the Spartans it came from the right, and was welcomed as the harbinger of success. The latter too were far superior in number; but since they could not avail themselves of this advantage in the narrow streets, their general sent back a part to the camp to rest and refresh themselves, with orders to return in the evening, to relieve that division which remained. Pressed thus continually by fresh foes, the wretched Messenians yet protracted the struggle. Three days and three nights they maintained an unceasing fight; at the end of these, watching, and cold, and wet, and thirst, and hunger, had

exhausted their strength. Then Theoclus addressed Aristomenes: "Why do we still maintain this fruitless labour? The decree has gone forth that Messenæ must fall: that which we now see was foretold to us long since by the priestess of Apollo, and the fig-tree lately warned us that the time was at hand. God grants to me a common end with my country: it is your part to preserve the Messenians and yourself." He rushed among the enemy, exclaiming, "Ye shall not rejoice in the possessions of the Messenians for ever!" and, sated with slaughter, fell surrounded by the victims of his despair. Aristomenes collected the survivors into a close column, in the centre of which he placed their wives and children, and stationing himself with his chosen band at their head, motioned with his spear to the enemy to allow them a free passage; which the Spartans granted, rather than exasperate their well-tried intrepidity to frenzy. They found a hospitable and friendly reception in Arcadia, the inhabitants of which supplied their wants, and would willingly have assigned to them a portion of their lands; but the ardent spirit of Aristomenes could not brook a quiet submission. Selecting five hundred men, the flower of his army, he asked if they were prepared to die with him in their country's behalf; and having received their hearty concurrence, proposed a scheme for surprising Sparta, and holding it as a pledge for their own restoration. Three hundred Arcadians volunteered to join him; but their hopes were frustrated a second time by the traitor Aristocrates. On this occasion, however, he was detected, and his former villany being at the same time revealed, the Arcadians, in just anger, stoned him to death. The Messenians, exhorted to join in the punishment, looked to Aristomenes, who sat weeping, and in imitation of their beloved leader, abstained from sharing in a merited revenge. Tender by nature must have been the heart of one, who, after having slain three hundred men with his own hand, could yet weep over the deserved punishment of an old companion in arms; and it is pleasing to contrast the staunch patriotism of the Messenians, still tempered by moderation and mercy,

with the savage and wanton cruelties acted by the polished Greeks of later ages.

The Pylians and Methonæans, who had preserved their navy, invited their countrymen in Arcadia to join them, and seek a settlement in some foreign land. Aristomenes refused to accept the proffered command; he would never cease, he said, to war against the Lacedæmonians, and well knew that he should ever be the cause of some evil to them. His son Gorgus, and Mantichus, son of Theoclus, supplied his place. Ere they had resolved on their course, Anaxilas, prince of Rhegium, sent to invite their co-operation in a war against the Zancleans, promising, in case of success, to assign to them that wealthy city. Zancle soon fell before their joint efforts. Anaxilas wished to slay the male citizens, and reduce their families to slavery; but the Messenians had learnt pity in the school of adversity, and deprecated being made the instruments of inflicting upon others the miseries which they themselves deplored. Interchanging oaths of fidelity with the inhabitants, they dwelt in union with them in the city, to which, in memory of their beloved country, they gave the name of Messene, which it bears to this day, under the slightly altered form of Messina.*.

Shortly after their departure, Damagetus, king of Ialysus, in Rhodes, inquiring at Delphi where he should seek a wife, was directed to choose the daughter of the best of the Grecians. He hesitated not to fix on Aristomenes, and took his youngest and only unmarried child. The warrior passed with her into Rhodes, and died soon

* We have retained this story in the text for its intrinsic beauty, and regret being obliged to say that it is entirely false. It has been shown by Bentley to be inconsistent with Herodotus and Thucydides, and is tacitly rejected by Clinton. Zancle was taken by the Samians, B.C. 494, at the suggestion of Anaxilas, tyrant of Rhegium; who afterwards expelled the Samians, and filling the city with men of various nations, called it Messene, being himself of Messenian descent.

after, ungratified in his wish of striking another blow at Lacedæmon. He was honoured with a splendid monument, and worshipped as a hero in Rhodes, and by his grateful countrymen.

Such of the Messenians as remained on the land were consigned to the miserable class of Helots. But even in this degraded state they were still a source of trouble to their masters ; and at last revolting, made so obstinate a defence, that they obtained permission to depart unarmed, and were settled by the Athenians at Naupactus, on the Corinthian gulf. Two centuries after their subjection, Epaminondas collected the scattered remnants of the people, and re-established them in possession] of their country, in a new city, named Messene, built under his patronage, on Mount Ithome. Thus ancient oracles were fulfilled, the tutelary deities preserved their trust, and the dying prophecy of Theoclus was accomplished.

The annals of the Norman conquest of England introduce us to a fit companion for Aristomenes, in respect of similarity of fortunes, as well as character. Hereward le Wake, a youth of noble Saxon family, while yet a boy was distinguished for strength and turbulence of character : so rough was he in play, that his hand was against every one, and every one's hand against him ; and so impatient of superiority, that if the prize of wrestling, or their other games, was awarded to another, he would assert his own title by the cogent argument of an appeal to the sword. His father's love of quiet seems to have been greater than his parental affection, for he took upon himself the task of ridding the neighbourhood of his troublesome son, and set forth so ably his violences against others, and certain boyish impertinences committed against himself, that he obtained from Edward the Confessor an order for his banishment. Hereward went to Northumberland, and thence travelling to Cornwall, Ireland, and Flanders, he distinguished himself everywhere so highly, for daring, skill in arms, and success in extricating himself from the greatest dangers, that it was a doubt whether his courage or his good fortune were the more admirable. His fame, won in many a conflict, and confirmed even by the report

of his enemies, was not long in reaching England; and so entirely changed the temper of father, mother, relations, and friends, that the worthy abbot of Croyland, from whom our narrative is taken, can only account for the sudden conversion of so much ill will into such violent affection, by attributing it to the special interposition of Providence.

During his abode in Flanders, he received news of the Norman invasion, of his father's death, and the bestowal of his inheritance upon a Norman, who insulted and oppressed his widowed mother. Hastening to avenge her, he quickly expelled the spoiler; and then remembering that he was no knight himself, though knights were now under his command, he received the order from his uncle the Abbot of Peterborough. For the English considered the investiture as a religious ceremony, and whoever underwent it confessed himself, received absolution, and spent the eve of his consecration in prayer in the church. In the morning, after hearing mass, he offered his sword upon the altar; and after the gospel had been read the priest blessed the weapon, and completed the ceremony by laying it upon his shoulder. But the Normans, who looked upon the order as exclusively military, held in abomination this method of receiving it.*

A body of noble Saxons, who, like Hereward, had been expelled from their inheritances, or driven by maltreatment into rebellion, occupied the Isle of Ely, a tract then environed by morasses, which now have almost disappeared, and admirably fitted to be a place of refuge from a more powerful but less active enemy. They chose Hereward for their leader, and he justified their preference and his own reputation by a series of exploits,

* Ingulph, Hist. Croyland. In later times the ceremony seems to have been universally religious:—see, for example, the dubbing of Don Quixote. We cannot doubt, however, but that Ingulph knew the practice of his own times. Probably the Normans, whose conversion to Christianity was not of very old standing, still retained a flavour of heathenism.

which continued long after to be favourite subjects of the popular ballads; for the preservation of some of which posterity would have owned a much greater obligation to Ingulph, than for the minute details connected with the monastery of Croyland, which he has thought it more important to preserve.

Upon his uncle's death the abbey of Peterborough was bestowed by the Conqueror upon a Norman, by name Thorold, to Hereward's great displeasure. In conjunction with the Danes, who then infested the eastern coast, he resolved to disturb the temporal enjoyments at least of the intruder. Let the Monk of Peterborough tell his own melancholy history.

“Early in the morning of the above-mentioned day, came the aforesaid evil doers, with many ships;* but the monks and their men shut the gates, and bestirred themselves manfully in their defence from above, so that the battle waxed very sore at the gate called Bulehithe.† Then Hereward and his comrades, seeing they could by no means gain the mastery, and force entrance, set fire to the houses near the gate, and so made passage by burning; also, they consumed all the offices of the monks, save the church and one house. Yet the monks met them, and besought that they would not do this evil; but they listened not, and went armed into the church, and would have carried away the great crucifix, but they could not. Nevertheless they took from its head a golden crown set with jewels, and a stool, also made of pure gold and jewels, from under its feet; also two golden reliquaries, and nine made of silver, fashioned with gold and jewels, and twelve crosses, some made of gold, others of silver, gold, and jewels. Nor did this content them,

* It is interesting to trace the physical changes of the island; the formidable swamps above mentioned are now converted into the richest land in England, and we doubt whether Peterborough, or Lincoln, then a centre of trade and commerce, be now accessible to any vessel more dignified than a coal-barge or an eight-oared cutter.

† “Now (A.D. 1692) Bulldyke Gate, on the south side of the monastery.”—*Gibson's Saxon Chronicle*.

but they went up into the tower, and took thence a great table made entirely of gold and gems and silver, which the monks had hidden there, which used to stand before the altar; and they took such a quantity of gold and silver in articles of all sorts, books, and ornaments, as can neither be told nor valued. All these were of the best quality, nor did the like of them remain in England. Yet they said that out of fealty to the church they did thus, and that the Danes would preserve those valuables for the use of the church, better than the Normans. And, indeed, Hereward himself was of a monastic order, and therefore they put some trust in him, and he afterwards made oath that he had done this from good motives, because he thought they should conquer King William, and themselves possess the land.

“So it came to pass that nothing that was taken away was ever restored, and the monastery, which had been so rich, was now reduced to poverty. And from that day nothing was ever added or restored to it, but its wealth continually diminished. Since Abbot Thorold himself not only added nothing, but dispersed its compact estates among his kinsmen and the knights that came with him.”*

The Abbot gave away sixty-two knights' fees (feoda) upon tenure of military service. Not long after, being naturally anxious to dislodge so formidable an enemy, he summoned his friends and vassals to drive Hereward from the vicinity. Ivo Tailboys, a Norman baron, to whom the Conqueror had granted the district of Hoyland, or Holland, in Lincolnshire, still known by the latter name, entered the woods at the head of his troops: the Abbot, with other dignitaries, kept warily on the outside; but while Ivo entered upon the right, Hereward darted round upon the left, carried off the Abbot and his companions, and made them pay a ransom of three thousand marks. At length William in person brought a powerful army against him, beleaguered the island closely by land and water, and, at vast expense, proceeded to make causeways

* Hugo Candidus.

across the marshes, by which his position was defended. Ivo Tailboys was a great believer in witchcraft, and he prevailed upon the king to try its efficacy. As the causeway proceeded, therefore, a witch was kept in advance, in a wooden turret; to fulminate her incantations against the enemy: but the farce soon met with a tragical conclusion, for Hereward, watching his time when the soldiers and workmen had gone somewhat forward, made a circuit, and by setting fire to the reeds upon their flank, involved soldiers, witch, and works, in one common ruin. But the odds were overwhelming, and at last the Saxons were compelled to submit. The other chiefs, including some of the most noble of the land, surrendered to the conqueror's mercy, and suffered death, mutilation, or fine, according to the sense entertained by him of their guilt. Hereward alone, by his superior gallantry and conduct, provided for the escape of his followers and himself, and was ultimately rewarded for his valour and perseverance, by being admitted to favour, and reinstated in his paternal estates. He finished his days in peace, and was buried in Croyland Abbey.

But British history offers another character to our notice, who bears perhaps a nearer personal resemblance to Aristomenes, although both his own fate and the issue of the struggle in which he engaged were different,—Wallace, the earliest, the stoutest, and the most fondly remembered champion of Scottish independence: whose name has been preserved and magnified in the recollection of his countrymen, with an affection not inferior to that which led the Messenians to pay divine honours to their departed hero. The fame of both rests chiefly upon tradition, for the earliest Scottish author who gives the history of Wallace wrote more than a century after his death, and the notices of his exploits in the English chroniclers are meagre and unsatisfactory. It is impossible therefore accurately to depict his character, or to draw the line minutely between truth and fiction. We see a form of commanding and colossal proportions, but we see it dimly, and the features must be filled up from our own imaginations: but we may at least trace indom-

itable courage, constancy, and patriotism; and if these lofty qualities were sometimes sullied by ferocity, yet, in justification of the sympathy and interest which his career excites, we may plead not only the character of the age, and the sufferings endured by Scotland under the English yoke, but the exacerbation of temper which must necessarily arise from a life of constant hardship and danger. Hunted continually from morass to forest, denied the enjoyment of domestic happiness, dependent upon his own right hand for the security which was to be found only in the death of his pursuers, it is rather matter for regret, than for stern censure, if in the hour of victory the call of mercy was unheeded. And in further extenuation we may add, that to control the excesses of his followers does not seem always to have been in the power even when it was in the wish of their chief; and that it is reasonable and consistent with the bitter spirit of national enmity which long prevailed, to conjecture that the blind minstrel, who is his principal biographer, consulted the passions and prejudices of his hearers no less by exaggerating the deeds of vengeance acted by his hero, than his hair-breadth escapes, and almost superhuman might.

It is amusing to note how party spirit has biassed the view taken of his origin and motives. The English writers speak of him slightly, without notice of the extraordinary qualities ascribed to him, as a common robber, who having by degrees collected round him a large band of desperate men, was emboldened to attack and plunder the suite of Ormesby, chief justiciary of Scotland. Compare this with the account given by Bower,* in whose eyes, it is but fair to say, the having fought stoutly in defence of Scotland was cloak enough to cover a multitude of offences.

“ In the same year (1297) that famous warrior William Wallace, the hammer and the scourge of the English, son of a noble knight of the same name, lifted up

* Bower continued the *Scotichronicon* of Fordun. The whole work is usually quoted under the latter name.

his head ; and when he saw the affliction of his nation, and the goods of the Scots delivered into the hands of their enemies, his heart pined and was sore afflicted. For he was tall of stature, gigantic in body, of calm aspect, and cheerful countenance, broad shouldered, big boned, proportionately corpulent, pleasant, yet stern to behold, thick loined, powerful of limb, a most stout champion, and very strong, and well knit in all his joints. Moreover the Most High had so distinguished him by a certain prepossessing mirthfulness, had so graced with some heavenly gift both his deeds and words, that by his mere aspect he disposed the hearts of all true Scots to love him. And no wonder, for he was most generous, in judgment most just, in ministering comfort most patient, in council most wise, in sufferance most enduring, in speech most eloquent : above all things hostile to lies and falsehood, and abhorrent of treachery : wherefore the Lord was with him, through whom he was in all things prosperous, venerating the church, revering churchmen, supporting the poor and widowed, cherishing orphans, raising the oppressed, lying in wait for thieves and robbers, and without reward inflicting deserved punishment upon them."

The following extract comprises such particulars of his early career as seem entitled to historical credit. "At this time (1297), and out of this middle class of the lesser barons, arose an extraordinary individual, who was at first driven into the field by intolerable injury and despair, and who in a short period of time, in the reconquest of his native country, developed a character which may without exaggeration be termed heroic. This was William Wallace, or Walays, the second son of Sir Malcolm Wallace, of Ellersley, near Paisley, a simple knight, whose family was ancient, but neither rich nor noble. In those days bodily strength and knightly prowess were of the highest consequence in commanding respect and ensuring success. Wallace had an iron frame. His make, as he grew up to manhood, approached almost to the gigantic, and his personal strength was superior to the common run of even the strongest men. His passions were hasty and violent ;

a strong hatred to the English, who now insolently lorded it over Scotland, began to show itself at a very early period of his life; and this aversion was fostered in the youth by an uncle, a priest, who, deploring the calamities of his country, was never weary of extolling the sweets of liberty and the miseries of dependence.

“The intrepid temper of Wallace appears first to have shown itself in a quarrel with one of the English officers, who insulted him. Provoked by his taunts, Wallace, reckless of the consequences, stabbed him with his dagger, and slew him on the spot. The consequence of this was to him the same as to many others, who at this time preferred a life of dangerous freedom to the indulgence and security of submission. He was proclaimed a traitor, banished his home, and driven to seek his safety in the wilds and fastnesses of his country. It was here that he collected by degrees a little band, composed at first of a few brave men of desperate fortunes who had forsworn their vassalage to their lords, and refused submission to Edward, and who at first carried on that predatory warfare against the English, to which they were impelled as well by the desire of plunder, and the necessity of subsistence, as by the love of liberty. These men chose Wallace for their chief. Superior rank, for as yet none of the nobility or barons had joined them, his uncommon courage and personal strength, and his unconquerable thirst of vengeance against the English, naturally influenced their choice, and the result proved how well it had fallen. His plans were laid with so much judgment, that in his first attacks against straggling parties of the English, he was generally successful; and if surprised by unexpected numbers, his superior strength and bravery, and the noble ardour with which he inspired his followers, enabled them to overpower every effort which was made against them.

“To him these early and desultory excursions against the enemy were highly useful; as he became acquainted with the strongest passes of his country, and acquired habits of command over men of fierce and turbulent spirits. To them the advantage was reciprocal, for they

began gradually to feel an undoubting confidence in their leader ; they were accustomed to rapid marches, to endure fatigue and privation, to be on their guard against surprise, to feel the effects of discipline and obedience, and by the successes which these ensured, to regard with contempt the nation by whom they had allowed themselves to be overcome.

“The consequences of these partial advantages over the enemy were soon seen. At first few had dared to unite themselves to so desperate a band. But confidence came with success, and numbers flocked to the standard of revolt. The continued oppressions of the English, the desire of revenge, and even the romantic and perilous nature of the undertaking recruited the ranks of Wallace, and he was soon at the head of a great body of Scottish exiles.”*

About this time he was joined by Sir William Douglas at the head of all his vassals. A series of brilliant successes followed the union of their little armies : and such was the effect produced on the public mind, that when their united strength broke in upon the West of Scotland, they were joined by some of the most powerful of the Scottish nobles, among whom we find the Steward of Scotland, Sir Andrew Moray of Bothwell, his brother, and Wishart, Bishop of Glasgow.

Such is the outset of Wallace's career, so far as it is matter of authentic history. His biographer, Blind Harry, carries him through a great number of adventures before this period ; but they possess so little of interest or poetical merit, and are written in such antiquated language, that the reader would probably derive little pleasure from them. They consist chiefly of rencontres with the English soldiery ; enterprising attacks upon the strongholds scattered throughout Scotland, and the various events of a desultory and almost predatory warfare, in all which his knightly prowess and sagacity are represented as compensating for inferiority in numbers, and as extricating his followers and himself even in the

* Tytler, History of Scotland, vol. i.

extremity of danger. The following specimens will probably be sufficient.

The first relates to the surprisal of Dunbarton Castle. Wallace, entering the town, found the captain and part of his garrison drinking, and bragging of what they would do if the rebel leader and his men were within reach.

When Wallace heard the Southron made sic din,
 He garred all bide, and him alane went in;
 The lave^a remained, to hear of their tithans,^b
 He saluit them with sturdy countenance.
 "Fellows," he said, "sen I come last fra hame
 In travail I was our land, and uncouth fame.
 Fra south Ireland I come in this countree,
 The new conquest of Scotland for to see.
 Part of your drink, or some good would I have."
 The captain then a shrewish answer him gave;
 "Thou seemest a Scot unlikely, us to spy;
 Thou may be aue of Wallace company.
 Contrar our king he is risen again,
 The land of Fife he has rademyt in playne.^c
 Thou sall here bide, while we wit how it be;
 Be thou of his, thou sall be hanged on high."
 Wallace then thought it was no time to stand,
 His noble sword he grippit soon in hand;
 Athwart his face drew that captain in tene,^d
 Strake all away that stood abowne his eyne;
 Ane othir braithly in the breast he bare,
 Baith brawn and bayn,^e the barly blade through share;
 The lave rushed up to Wallace in great ire;
 The third he felled full fiercely in the fire.
 Stenyn of Ireland and Kerle, in that thrang,
 Kepynt na charge, but entred them amang;
 And othir more that to the door can press:
 While they saw him, there could no man them cess,^f
 The Southron men full soon were brought to dead.

The following extract is of a more romantic character. Wallace, being closely pursued by the English, had, in a mingled fit of anger and suspicion, struck off the head of

^a Remainder. ^b Tidings. ^c Recovered entirely.
^d In anger. ^e Bone. ^f Stop.

one of his followers, by name Fawdoun. At night, when he and his men had taken refuge in a tower, they heard a horn blown at hand. Two of them went out to see what the cause might be; they did not return, and the horn was again heard louder than before. Two more were sent, and so, till Wallace was left alone.

When he alane Wallace was leavit there,
 The awfull blast abounded mickle mair.
 Then trowed he they had his lodging seen;
 His sword he drew, of noble metal keen,
 Syne^s forth he went whereat he heard the horn.
 Without the door Fawdoun was them beforne,
 As till his sight, his awn head in his hand.
 A cross he made, when he saw him so stand.
 At Wallace in the head he swaket^h there;
 And he in haste soon hyntⁱ it by the hair,
 Syne out again at him he couth^j it cast;
 Intil his heart he greatly was aghast.
 Right well he trowed that was no sprite of man,
 It was some devil, that sic malice began.
 He wist no waill^k there longer for to byde.
 Up through the hall thus wight Wallace can glide,
 Till a close stair: the boards rave in twain.
 Fifteen foot large he lap out of that inn.^l
 Up the water suddenly he couth fare;
 Again he blent^m what perance he saw there.
 Him thought he saw Fawdoun, that hugly sir;
 That hail hall he had set in a fire;
 A great rafter he had intill his hand.
 Wallace as then no longer would he stand.
 Of his gude men full great merveill had he,
 How they were lost through his fell fantasy.

In the spring of 1297 his career of victory was checked at Irvine, by the dissensions and desertion of his army; but the cloud soon passed away, for in the autumn we find him engaged in the siege of Dundee, from which he was recalled by the approach of the English, under the com-

^s Then. ^h Cast forcibly. ⁱ Caught.
^j Could. ^k Knew of no advantage.
^l Abiding place. ^m Glanced.

mand of Warenne, Earl of Surrey. Wallace determined to await the enemy on the banks of the Forth, near Stirling, where the river could be crossed only by a narrow and inconvenient bridge, that scarce admitted the passage of two horsemen together. The Scottish army consisted of forty thousand foot, and one hundred and eighty horse; the English, of fifty thousand foot, and one thousand horse.

Surrey was probably aware of the strong position occupied by the Scots, and the danger of passing the bridge in face of the enemy, for he despatched two friars to propose terms to Wallace. "That robber," says Hemingford, "replied, 'Tell your fellows, that we come not hither for the benefit of peace, but are prepared for battle, to avenge and to free our kingdom. Let them, therefore, come up when they will, and they shall find us ready to meet them beard to beard.' And when these tidings came to our men, they that were hot-headed said, 'Let us go up against them, for these are but threats.' But the wiser part added, 'We may not yet advance, until we have well reflected what counsel to pursue.' Then said that stout knight, Sir Richard Lundy, who had surrendered to us at Irvine,* 'My lords, if it shall be that we ascend the bridge, we are dead men. For we can only pass by two and two, and the enemy are on our flank, and when they please, will form in line and charge us. But not far off there is a ford where sixty men can cross at once. Now then give me five hundred horse and a small body of foot; and we will make a circuit in the enemy's rear and overthrow him: and meanwhile you, Lord Earl, and your company will pass the bridge in safety.' But they would not abide by his good counsel, saying that it was unsafe to separate. So being divided in opinion, some cried out to pass the bridge, others the contrary. Among whom Cressingham, the king's treasurer, a proud man and a child of perdition, said, 'It is not well, my Lord Earl, to put off this matter farther,

* A town in Ayrshire, where many of the insurgents had submitted a short time before.

and to spend the king's money in vain. Rather let us march up, and do our devoir as we are bound.' The earl, therefore, being moved by his words, gave orders that they should pass the bridge. A strange thing was it, and very direful in its issue, that so many, and such wise men, who knew the enemy to be at hand, should venture on a narrow bridge, which two horsemen could hardly pass abreast. So that, as some said, who were in that battle, if they had filed over without bar or hindrance from break of day till eleven o'clock, still a large part of the rear would have remained behind. Neither was there a fitter place in all Scotland to deliver over the English to the Scots, or the many into the hands of the few. The banners of the king and earl passed over, and among the first that most valiant knight, Sir Marmaduke Twenge. And when the enemy saw that as many as they thought to overthrow had crossed, they ran down the hill, and blocked up the bridge end with their spearmen; so that from thenceforth there was neither passage nor return, but in the attempt many were cast over the bridge and drowned. As the Scots came down from the mountain, Sir Marmaduke said, 'Is it not time, my brethren, to charge them?' And they assented, and spurred their horses: and in the shock some of the Scots horsemen fell, and the others, to a man, ran away. As our men pursued the fugitives, one said to Sir Marmaduke, 'Sir, we are betrayed, for our comrades do not follow, and the banners of the king and earl are not to be seen.' Then looking back, they saw that many of our men, and among them the standard-bearers, had fallen, and said, 'Our way to the bridge is cut off, and we are barred from our friends: it is better to make trial of the water, if it be that we may pass it, than to plunge into the columns of the enemy, and fall to no purpose. It is difficult, yea, impossible, for us to pass through the midst of the Scots.' Then replied that valiant knight, Sir Marmaduke, 'Surely, my dear friends, it shall never be said of me, that I drowned myself for nothing. Do not ye so either, but follow me, and I will clear a passage through them even to the bridge.' Then spurring his charger, he plunged

among the enemy, and dealing blows on either side, passed unhurt through the throng, and laid open a wide path for his followers. For he was tall, and stout of body. And as he fought thus valiantly, his nephew, who was wounded, his horse being slain, shouted after him, 'Sir, save me.' He replied, 'Get up behind me.'—'I cannot,' he answered, 'for my strength is gone.' Presently his comrade, an esquire of the same Sir Marmaduke, came up, and descending from his horse, he placed the young man on it, and said to his master, 'Sir, go where you will, I follow ;' and he followed him to the bridge, so that both were preserved. All who remained, to the number of one hundred horsemen, and five thousand foot, perished, except a few who swam the river. One knight, also, with much difficulty, passed the water upon his barded horse." *

The Earl of Surrey quitted the field as soon as he was rejoined by Twenge, giving orders for the destruction of the bridge. The Scots, therefore, did not cross to pursue their success : but notwithstanding, quantities of plunder fell into their hands, and the decisive nature of the defeat is evident from the consequences which attended it. In the words of Knighton, "This awful beginning of hostilities roused the spirit of Scotland, and sunk the hearts of the English." In a short time not a fortress of Scotland remained in Edward's possession. The castles of Edinburgh and Roxburgh were dismantled, and Berwick, being abandoned by the English upon the advance of the Scots, was occupied by Wallace, who resolved on an immediate expedition into England, with the view of providing sustenance for his troops, and lightening the horrors of famine, which now fell severely upon Scotland.

"After that ill-omened beginning," Hemingford continues, "the Scots were animated, and the hearts of the English troubled. Wallace overran and devastated the whole of Northumberland. In that time the praise

* Hemingford, Hist. Edw. I., ed. Hearne, p. 126-9. Barded, clad in armour as well as his rider.

of God ceased to be heard in all monasteries and churches from Newcastle-upon-Tyne to Carlisle. For all monks, canons, and other priests, with all the commons, fled before the face of the Scots." Turning then westward, he passed Carlisle, which refused to surrender, ravaged Cumberland, and was advancing into Durham, when his progress was stopped by the winter's setting in with unusual severity: a deliverance ascribed to the miraculous assistance of Cuthbert, the patron saint of the diocese. "Returning to Hexham, where stood a wealthy monastery, which the Scots had plundered on their advance, three canons of that house, who, having no fear of death, had just returned, fled into an oratory which they had rebuilt, that, if it were the Divine will, they might there be offered as a sacrifice of sweet savour. Presently the spearmen came in and shook their lances over them, saying, 'Show us the treasures of your church, or ye shall instantly die.' One of them replied, 'It is not long since you and your people carried off our property, as if it had been your own, and you know where you have placed it. Since then we have sought out a few things, as you now see.' Meanwhile Wallace appeared and rebuked his men, and bid them give way, and asked one of the monks to celebrate mass, which was done. And at the moment of elevating the host, Wallace went forth to lay aside his armour; and then, when the priest was about to take the holy sacrament, the Scots gathered round him, to snatch away the cup. And after Wallace had washed his hands, and returned from the sacristy to the altar, he found the chalice and the napkins, and other ornaments of the altar, carried off; even the book in which the mass had been begun, was gone. And while the priest was hesitating what he should do, Wallace returned, and seeing what had passed, he gave order that those sacrilegious men should be sought out, and put to death. But they were not found, inasmuch as they were not sought for in earnest. And he said to the canons, 'Go not away from me, but keep near me, as you value your safety. For this

people is ill-disposed, and may neither be excused nor punished.' ”*

Soon after his return from this expedition, he was elected governor of Scotland, and his measures in this high office appear to have been judicious and temperate. But the haughty barons could not bear the superiority of one whose only claim was in his merit, and thus division was sown in the Scottish councils at the time when unanimity was more than ever needed. In the summer of 1298 Edward himself invaded Scotland at the head of a powerful army. The plan adopted by Wallace upon this occasion was the same as that which was afterwards so successfully executed by Bruce. He avoided a general battle, which with an army far inferior to the English must have been fought to a disadvantage, —he fell back slowly before the enemy, leaving some garrisons in the most important castles, driving off all supplies, wasting the country through which the English were to march, and waiting till the scarcity of provisions compelled them to retreat, and gave him a favourable opportunity of breaking down upon them with full effect.†

* Hemingford, Hist. Edw. I., ed. Hearne, p. 134.

† His system of war is embodied in some monkish Latin verses called ‘The Bruce’s Testament,’ of which the following is an old Scottish translation :—

On fut suld be all Scottis weire,
 Be hyll and moss thaimself to weire,
 Lat wod for wallis be ; bow, and spier,
 And battle-axe, their fechtung gear.
 That ennymeis do thaim na dreire
 In strait placis gar keip all stoire,
 And birnen the planen land thaim befoire.
 Thanan sall they pass away in haist
 Quhen that thai find nothing bot waist ;
 With wyles and wakenen of the nycht,
 And mekil noyse maid on hycht ;
 Thanen shall thai turnen with gret affrai
 As thai were chasit with swerd away.
 This is the counsall and intent
 Of gud King Robert’s testament.

They advanced unopposed, therefore, but found an inhospitable desert; and Edward, unable to replace his exhausted stores, was at length compelled to issue orders for a retreat to Edinburgh, hoping to meet his fleet at Leith, and then to recommence offensive warfare. At this critical juncture, when the military skill and wisdom of the dispositions made by Wallace became apparent, and when the moment to harass and destroy the invading army in its retreat had arrived, the treachery of her nobles again betrayed Scotland to the enemy. Two Scottish lords, Patrick, Earl of Dunbar, and the Earl of Angus, at day-break privately sought the quarters of the Bishop of Durham, and informed him that the Scots were encamped not far off in the forest of Falkirk. The Scottish earls, who dreaded the resentment of Edward on account of their late renunciation of allegiance, did not venture to seek the king in person. They sent their intelligence by a page, and added, that having heard of his projected retreat, it was the intention of Wallace to surprise him by a night attack. Edward, on hearing this welcome news, could not conceal his joy. "Thanks be to God," he exclaimed, "who hitherto hath extricated me from every danger. They shall not need to follow me, since I shall forthwith go and meet them."*

The consequence of this treachery was the fatal battle of Falkirk, in which the Scots were totally defeated, with vast slaughter, owing to the jealousy and dissensions of the nobility; and Wallace, finding his own exertions thwarted, resigned his office.

"Beside the watyre of Forth, he
 Forsook Wardane ever to be.
 For lever^a he had to lyve simply.
 Na under sic doubt in Seigniory.
 Na the leal comonys of Scotland
 He wold not had peryst under his hand.
 "Of his good deeds, and manhood
 Gret Gestis, I hard say, are made.

* Tytler, vol. i.

* Rather.

But sa many I trow not
 As he intil hys dayis wroucht.
 Wha all his Dedis of price wald dyte
 Him worthyd a gret Book to wryte
 And all thae to wryte in here
 I want both wyt and good laysere.”*

For several years after this, we do not meet with his name in the records of authentic history. The blind minstrel transports him to France during this period, where he goes through many adventures, and, among others, kills a lion in single combat. But we must hasten to the closing scene of his life. After Edward had overrun and subjected the whole country in 1303, all others who had distinguished themselves in the war were admitted to pardon upon terms more or less hard. “As for William Wallace,” says the deed, “it is covenanted, that if he thinks proper to surrender himself, it must be unconditionally to the will and mercy of our lord the king.” To accept such terms was to deliver himself over to death; he therefore betook himself to the woods and mountains, and lived upon plunder.

It is amusing to trace the effects of national partiality in the contradictory accounts of the Scottish and English historians. Bower tells us that Wallace’s friends endeavoured to induce him to submit, upon the same terms as themselves; and that Edward was so anxious upon this head, that he offered, not only personal security, but an earldom, with ample domains, to be selected, by himself, either in Scotland or England, as the price of his allegiance. But Wallace answered, that if every other Scot should submit, still he and his companions would stand up for the freedom of the kingdom; and never, as they hoped for God’s favour, obey any one except their monarch or his deputy. Langtoft, on the other hand, says that the Scottish hero offered to surrender upon assurance of safety in life, limb, and estate; but Edward’s anger was so hot against him, that he burst into a fury at the bare proposition.

* Wyntown, VIII. xv. v. 65.

When they brought that tiding, Edward was full grim,
 And betought him the fende,^a als his traytoure in lond.
 And ever-ilkon his frende, that him susteyned, or fond.
 Three hundred marke he hette unto his warisoun,^b
 That with him so met, or bring his hede to toun.
 Now flies William Wallis, of pes nought he spedis,^c
 In mores and in mareis with robberie him fedis.

Ah Jhesu whan thou will, how rightwis is thy mede:
 That of the wrong has gilt, the endyng may he drede.
 William Waleis is nomen,^d that maister was of theves.
 Tiding to the kyng is comen, that robberie mischeves.^e
 Sir Jon of Menetest sewed William so nehi,^f
 He took him whan he wend lest,^g on nyght his lemman by.
 That was thought treson of Jak Short his man,
 He was the encheson,^h that Sir Jon so him nam.ⁱ
 Jak's brother had he slayn, the Waleis that is said,
 The more Jak was fayn to do, William that braid.^j
 Selcouthly^k he endis, the man that is fals,
 If he trest on his frends, they begile him als.
 Begiled is William, taken is, and bondon.
 To Ingland with him thei came, and led him to London.
 The first dome he fanged,^l for treson was he drawen.
 For robberie was he hanged, and for he had men slawen,
 And for he had brent abbeis, and men of religion,
 Eft^m from the galweis quickⁿ thei let him down,
 And bouweld him all hote,^o and brent them in the fire.
 His hede than of smote, swilk^p was William's hire;
 And for he had mayntend the werre at his myght,
 On lordship lended thore^q he had no right,
 And stroied thore he knew, in fele stede sers.^r
 His body thei hewed on four quarters,

^a Consigned him to the devil as a traitor.

^b Promised for his reward. ^c Fails in obtaining peace.

^d Taken.

^e Has ill luck.

^f Menteith followed so nigh.

^g Least expected.

^h Occasion.

ⁱ Nimmed, taken.

^j Office.

^k Strangely.

^l Sentence he received.

^m Afterwards.

ⁿ Alive.

^o Embowelled him while warm.

^p Such.

^q Seized there.

^r Destroyed where. In many different places.

To hang in four tounes, to mene^a of his maners,
 In stede of Gonfaynounes^t and of his baners.
 At London is his heved, his quarters ere leved,^u in Scotland
 spred,
 To wirschip ther isles,^v and lere of his wiles, how well
 that he sped.
 It is not to drede, traytour sall spede,^w als he is worthi,
 His lif sall he tyne, and die thorgh pyne, withouten merci.
 Thus may men here, a lad for to lere, to biggen in pays.^x
 It fallis in his eye, that hewes over high, with the Walays.
Langtoft's Chronicle of Edw. I.

"The day after his arrival at London, he was brought on horseback to Westminster, the mayor, sheriffs, and aldermen, and many others, both on foot and horseback, accompanying him; and in the greate hall at Westminster, he being placed upon the south bench, crowned with laurel, for that he had said in times past, that he ought to bear a crowne in that Hall (as it was commonly reported), and being appeached for a traytor by Sir Peter Mallorie, the king's justice, hee answered, that he never was traytor to the king of England, but for other things whereof he was accused, he confessed them, and was after headed and quartered."*

His head was set up^a at London, his quarters were sent to Newcastle, Berwick, Perth, and Aberdeen. But Edward reaped no advantage from this act of cruelty and injustice, except the gratification of his implacable temper. If intimidation was his object, it failed, as was to be expected in the case of a high-spirited people: and the only effect of raising these ghastly trophies was to inspire a deeper hatred of the tyrant who commanded them, and of the treacherous minister of his revenge. The latter long continued to be an object of especial hatred to the Scottish nation; and is condemned to shame

^a In memory.

^t Standards.

^u Head. Were left (?) ^v ?

^w It is not to be feared a traitor shall succeed.

^x A lad learn (?) to build in peace.

* Stow, Edw. I.

in its traditional literature under the fitting title of the "false Menteith."

Here, it might be supposed, history must end, and the ultimate destiny of the oppressor and oppressed, the tyrant and his victim, remain a mystery until the time when all things shall be brought to light. But the patriotic chronicler before quoted, who probably could not bear that the last scene of his hero should be one of suffering and degradation, undertakes to enlighten our curiosity on this subject. We read in the continuation of Fordun by Bower, that, according to the testimony of many credible Englishmen, "an holy hermit, being rapt in the spirit, saw innumerable souls delivered from purgatory marshalling the way, while the spirit of Wallace was conducted to heaven by angels, in reward of his inflexible patriotism. To whom the proverb may be applied, 'The memory of the just with praise, and the name of the wicked stinketh.'"

Soon after, he proceeds to illustrate the latter clause of the proverb. When Edward died upon his march to Scotland, an English knight, Bannister by name, upon the night of his decease, saw in a trance his lord the king, surrounded by a multitude of devils, who were mocking him with much laughter, and saying,

En rex Edwardus, debacchans ut leopardus !
 Olim dum vixit populum Dei malefixit.
 Nobis viæ talis comes ibis, care sodalis,
 Quo condemneris, ut dæmonibus socieris.
 Te sequimur voto prorsus torpore remoto.*

Meanwhile they drove him on with whips and scorpions.

* It is impossible in English to give the odd effect of the leonine rhymes. The meaning of these rude lines may be as rudely given thus :

Behold the proud and cruel king, who like a leopard
 dread

In life the people of the Lord did put in woeful stead :
 For which, good friend, along with us unto that place of
 woe,

Where friends and devils company, right merrily you go.

“ Let us sing,” they said, “ the canticle of death, beseeming this wicked soul ; because she is the daughter of death, and food of fire unquenchable ; the friend of darkness, and enemy of light.” And then they repeated *En rex*, &c.

While thus tormented by the evil spirits, he turned, said the knight, his trembling and bloodless visage towards me, as if to implore the aid which I was used to minister to him. But when voice and sense both deserted me, he cast upon me such a dreadful look, that while I live and remember it I can never more be cheerful. With that, he was in a moment swallowed up into the infernal pit, exclaiming in a doleful voice,

Heu cur peccavi ? fallor quia non bene cavi.
 Heu cur peccavi ? perit et nihil est quod amavi.
 Heu cur peccavi ? video, quia littus aravi,
 Cum sudore gravi mihimet tormenta paravi.*

Bannister was so terrified by this vision, that he forsook the world and its vanities, and, for the improvement of his life and conversation, spent his latter days in solitude.†

Scotland did not long languish in want of a deliverer. The place of Wallace was quickly filled up by one scarce his inferior in knightly renown, or in the affections of his countrymen. Were it not for the length of this article, we should willingly narrate some of the exploits and hair-breadth escapes which procured for Robert Bruce, even among the English, the reputation of being the third best knight in Europe ; but we must hasten to conclude with the panegyric of the affectionate Bower.

* Why did I sin, woe, woe is me ? and took no heed or thought.

Why did I sin, woe, woe is me ? all that I loved is nought.

Why did I sin, woe, woe is me ? my seed upon the shore

I sowed with toil and sweat, to reap of pains an endless store.

† Lib. xii. 13.

“There is no living man who is able to narrate the story of those complicated misfortunes which befell him in the commencement of this war; his frequent perils, his retreats, the care and weariness, the hunger and thirst, the watching and fasting, the cold and nakedness, to which he exposed his person, the exile into which he was driven, the snares and ambushes which he escaped, the seizure, imprisonment, execution, and utter destruction of his dearest friends and relatives. And if, in addition to these almost innumerable and untoward events, which he ever bore with a cheerful and unconquered spirit, any man should undertake to describe his individual conflicts, and personal successes, those courageous and single-handed combats in which, by the favour of God, and his own great strength and courage, he would often penetrate into the thickest of the enemy,—now becoming the assailant, and cutting down all who opposed him; at another time acting on the defensive, and evincing equal talents in escaping from what seemed inevitable death;—if any writer shall do this, he will prove, if I am not mistaken, that he had no equal in his own time, either in knightly prowess, or in strength and vigour of body.”*

* Lib. xii. 9.

CHAPTER III.

Treatment of Prisoners of War—Crœsus—Roman Triumphs—Sapor and Valerian—Imprisonment of Bajazet—His treatment of the Marshal Boucicaut and his Companions—Changes produced by the advance of Civilization—Effect of Feudal Institutions—Anecdote from Froissart—Conduct of the Black Prince towards the Constable Du Guesclin and the King of France.

THE wealth of Crœsus is proverbial, and the vicissitudes of his fortune have been a favourite subject for moralists in all ages. In Mitford's History of Greece, as well as in that published in the Library of Useful Knowledge, all notice of them is confined to the simple statement, that he was conquered by Cyrus. The circumstances of his treatment, however, as they are related by Herodotus, are curious; and we propose, therefore, to translate them literally from that author, leaving it to the reader's discretion to reject whatever is evidently fabulous.

It is well known that he was induced to make war upon Cyrus by an ambiguous response of the Delphic oracle, which predicted to him, "that if he made war upon the Persians, he would destroy a great empire." The oracle was a very safe one. Crœsus understood it, that the Persian empire would be destroyed; but the credit of the god was equally supported by the event which really took place, the defeat of Crœsus and the destruction of his kingdom. Upon his defeat he took refuge in Sardis, which was besieged and ultimately stormed. "So the Persians captured Sardis and took Crœsus alive, after he had reigned fourteen years; and led him before Cyrus, who caused a mighty funeral pile

to be built, upon which he set Cræsus in fetters, and with him fourteen Lydian youths; whether it were in his mind to offer them to some deity as the first-fruits of his conquest, or with intention to perform some vow, or because he had heard of Cræsus's piety and therefore set him upon the pile, that he might know whether any god would deliver him from being burnt alive. Howbeit, he did so: but while Cræsus stood upon the pile, it struck him, even in this extremity of evil, that Solon was inspired when he said that no man ought to be called happy while he was yet alive.* And when this thought occurred to him, after being long silent, he thrice repeated with groans the name of Solon. Cyrus heard him, and bade the interpreters ask who this Solon, whom he invoked, might be; and they drew near, and did so. But Cræsus spoke not for some time, and replied at length, when he was compelled, 'One whom I would rather than much wealth, were introduced to the conversation of all monarchs.' But as he spoke unintelligibly to them, they again asked what he meant; and when they became urgent and troublesome, he related at length how Solon, an Athenian, came to him, and having beheld all his treasures, set them at nought, having spoken to such purpose, that all things had happened according to his words, which yet bore no especial reference to himself more than to the rest of mankind, particularly to those who trusted in their own good fortune. So by the time Cræsus had given this account, the pile being lighted, the outside of it was in flames. And when Cyrus heard from the interpreters what Cræsus said, he repented, and reflected that he, being but a man himself, was casting another alive into the flames who formerly had been no whit inferior to himself in

* In the celebrated interview between Solon and Cræsus, the sage first offended the king by questioning the power of wealth to produce happiness, and concluded by reading him a long moral lesson, to the purport, that since no man knew what the morrow might produce, no man could be called happy until present prosperity was crowned by a happy death.

prosperity : and being also in dread of divine vengeance, and considering that nothing human is unchangeable, he ordered the fire to be forthwith extinguished, and Croesus, with his companions, to be taken down ; but his officers, with all their endeavours, were unable to master it. Then Croesus, as the Lydians say, discovering that Cyrus had changed his purpose, when he saw that all were endeavouring, and yet were unable to quench the fire, called loudly upon 'Apollo, entreating the god, if that he ever had offered any acceptable gifts, now to stand by, and deliver him from the present evil. And as he called upon the god in tears, suddenly clouds collected in the serene sky, and the storm broke down, and a torrent of rain fell, and extinguished the fire. Cyrus, therefore, being by these means instructed that Croesus was a good man, and beloved by the gods, inquired of him, when he was come down from the pile, 'Croesus, who persuaded you to invade my kingdom, and thus become an enemy instead of a friend ?' And he said, 'O king, I have done thus to further your good, and my own evil fate : but the god of the Grecians, who puffed me up to war, has been the author of these events. For no man is so witless as to choose war instead of peace, when, in the one, fathers bury their sons, and in the other, sons their fathers. But it was the pleasure of the gods that these things should turn out thus.'

"Thus spoke Croesus, and Cyrus released him, and kept him near his person, and thenceforth treated him with much respect."*

The evident intermixture of fable with this tale is calculated to throw doubt upon the whole of it, and indeed it seems at variance with the character of Cyrus. That Xenophon omits all mention of the circumstances related would be a strong argument in disproof of them, if they were calculated to advance his hero's reputation ; but in the present case his silence is of little weight. The close resemblance, however, between the preservation of Croesus, and the miraculous deliverance of the

Jewish youths condemned by Nebuchadnezzar to the furnace, might warrant us in suspecting that some account of so impressive a display of Divine power had reached the western coast of Asia, and that the careless or unfaithful annalists of those early times transferred the scene from Babylon to Lydia, and substituted the names best known in their own history for the barbarian appellations of the Assyrian monarch and his prisoners. This idea may be supported by the expression of Herodotus, that Cyrus condemned Croesus to be burnt "because of his piety, that he might know whether any god would deliver him from being burnt alive." Cyrus was neither cruel nor a scoffer, so that we cannot suppose it to have been an impious jest, and can as little imagine that it was a serious experiment on the part of the Persian to try the power of the Grecian deities. It is not very likely, therefore, that such a reason was invented to account for the action; but the recorded preservation of the Jews, and the decree of Nebuchadnezzar "that there is no other god that can deliver after this sort," may well enough have led to the inference that the monarch's object was to prove the power which in the end he was obliged to confess.

No extraordinary quantity either of humanity or reflection was necessary to have impressed on Cyrus's mind, in the first instance, the truths contained in Solon's warning to his rival. But humanity towards prisoners was no virtue of antiquity; and in this respect the practice of European nations of modern times offers a striking contrast to that of heathenism in all ages and regions. Our Scandinavian ancestors and the North American Indians put prisoners to death for revenge, or for the mere pleasure of inflicting pain: the rude Druids and the comparatively polished priests of Mexico alike esteemed an enemy's blood the most grateful offering to their savage deities. The histories of Greece and Rome abound also with acts of atrocious cruelty; while the East is notorious alike for the frequent changes of her dynasties, and for the unsparing policy which has prompted successive conquerors to establish their

own thrones by the extermination of all possible claimants.

It is not fair, however, to select none but unfavourable examples; and of favourable ones, few or none are more celebrated than the generosity of Alexander and the virtue of Scipio. After Alexander had gained the important battle of Issus (B.C. 333), in the Persian war, Darius's family fell into the victor's hands.* They were treated with the respect due to their rank and their misfortunes. "Not long after, one of his queen's eunuchs escaped to Darius, who, when he saw him, first asked whether his children and his wife and mother were alive. And hearing that they were so, that they were addressed as queens, and enjoyed all the respect and attention which they had possessed at his own court, he inquired in addition, whether his wife had preserved her faith; and being satisfied on this point also, he again inquired whether any insult or violence had been offered to her. The eunuch affirmed with an oath, 'O king, your wife remains even as you left her, and Alexander is the best and most temperate of men.' Upon which Darius lifted up his hands towards heaven, and prayed, 'O sovereign Jupiter, in whose hands are placed the fortunes of kings upon earth, above all things do thou maintain the kingdom of the Medes and Persians, which thou hast given to me! But if thou wilt that I be king of Asia no longer, then intrust my power to none but Alexander.'"[†]

Closely akin to this in all its circumstances is the celebrated story of the continence of Scipio, who has

* "Ci doivent prendre garde cils qui leur fames mainent avec euls en os, et en batailles, car Daires li rois de Perse, & Antioines, et autre prince terrien manerent leur fames en lor compaignie en os quant il i aloient, & en batailles: et pour ce furent desconfit et occis, Daires par le grant Alexandre, et Antioines par Octavien. Pour ce meismement ne devroient mener nus princes fames en tex besoignes: car elles ne sont fors empechement." The language is that of the thirteenth century. *Croniques de S. Denys*, liv. v. 1.

† Arrian, iv. 20.

obtained immortal praise by surrendering untouched to her lover a beautiful Spanish lady who had been selected from the other prisoners and presented to him; and from the admiration testified by all antiquity for the virtue displayed alike by the Grecian and the Roman hero, we may form an opinion of the treatment which captives generally endured. We have no wish to detract from the praise which is justly due to them, or to undervalue the merit of those who precede their age in humanity and refinement; but it is worthy of observation that in modern times, far from such conduct being regarded as an effort of virtue almost super-human, infamy or death would be the portion of a general who acted otherwise. These exceptions therefore do really serve to confirm the rule; and the extravagant commendation which has been bestowed upon such self-denial bears incontrovertible evidence to the general want of generosity in conquerors, and to the unhappy condition of the conquered.

Few foreigners of regal dignity or exalted fortune fell into the power of the Grecian commonwealths: of their treatment of each other's citizens we shall have occasion to speak hereafter. But the gigantic grasp of Roman ambition comprehended the most powerful of the earth, and made them drink deep of degradation. The usual lot of prisoners of war was slavery; a practice bad enough, but common to the rest of antiquity with Rome: the institution of triumphs is her peculiar glory and distinction. Something may be said in palliation of a victor, who, having possession of his enemy, obviates the danger of further resistance or revolt by committing him to that narrow prison from which alone there is no chance of escape. But when a Roman general's arms were crowned with success, the prisoners of highest estimation were carefully reserved; and when all danger from their life was at an end, and their degradation, as far as external circumstances can degrade, was complete, after they had been led in chains before their conqueror's car, to swell his vanity and satiate the pride of Rome, they were sent to perish unheeded and unlamented by

the hands of the executioner, and the thanksgiving due to the gods and the triumphal banquet were delayed until the savage ritual was duly performed. "Those even who triumph, and therefore grant longer life to the hostile chiefs, that from their presence in the procession the Roman people may derive its fairest spectacle and fruit of victory, yet bid them to be led to prison when they begin to turn their chariots from the Forum to the Capitol; and the same day puts an end to the conqueror's command and to the life of the conquered."* They led the prisoners to execution at the moment when the triumphal chariot began to ascend the Capitoline hill, in order, they said, that their moment of highest exultation might be that of their enemies' extremest agony. There is a needless barbarity and insolence in the whole proceeding which is peculiarly disgusting; and which was aggravated by the solemn hypocrisy of placing in the triumphal chariot a slave to whisper in the victor's ear, "Remember that thou art a man," when in the same instant they displayed so signal a disregard for the reverses to which humanity is exposed, and such contempt for the lessons which that warning ought to have taught.

We may take as an example the treatment of Jugurtha, king of Numidia; for whom, indeed, so far as his own merits are concerned, no treatment could have been too severe. "Marius, bringing home his army againe out of Lybia into Italy, took possession of his consulship the first day of January, and therewithall made his triumph into the city of Rome, shewing that to the Romans which they thought never to have seen; and that was, king Jugurth prisoner, who was so subtile a man, and could so well frame himself unto his fortune, and with his craft and subtilty was of so [great courage besides, that none of his enemies ever hoped to have had him alive. But it is said that after he was led in this triumph, he fell mad straight upon it; and the pompe of triumph being ended, he was carried unto prison, where the serjeants, for hast to have the spoil of him, tore his

* In Verrem. Act. ii. lib. v. 30.

apparel, by force from off his back : and because they would take away his rich gold earrings, that hung on his eares, they pulled away with them the tippe of his eare, and then cast him naked to the bottome of a deep dungeon, his wits being altogether troubled, Yet when they did throw him downe, laughing he said, ' O Hercules, how cold are your baths ! ' He lived there yet six days, fighting with hunger, and desiring alwaies to prolong his miserable life to the last hour : the which was a just deserved punishment for his wicked life."*

Marius, however, with all his military talents was but a rude and blood-thirsty soldier. From Cæsar, on the contrary, who throughout the civil wars displayed signal generosity and mildness of temper, we might have expected a fairer estimate of the treatment due to a noble enemy. But in his treatment of Vercingetorix those noble qualities are exchanged for the haughty and selfish cruelty which the foreign policy of Rome was most admirably calculated to produce. That prince, after a most gallant and almost successful stand in defence of the liberties of Gaul, being shut up in Alesia, and reduced to extremity by Cæsar, surrendered himself to the victor's mercy in hope of obtaining better terms for his comrades. The scene is thus described by Dion Cassius :—

" Vercingetorix being still at liberty, and unwounded, might have escaped ; but hoping, for the sake of their previous friendship, to obtain forgiveness from Cæsar, he went out to him without notice of his coming. And while the Roman general was seated on the tribunal, he appeared suddenly, so as to alarm some persons, for he was tall of stature, and made a gallant appearance in his armour. All around being hushed, he said nothing, but fell on his knee, stretching out his hand in gesture of supplication. All others were struck with compassion, both by the recollection of his former high state, and by the exceeding piteousness of the spectacle before them. But Cæsar made that from which he chiefly expected

* Plut. in Mar.

to derive safety, the heaviest charge against him; for, dwelling on the return for his friendship, he made the injury appear the heavier. And therefore he pitied him not in that conjuncture, but for the present cast him into bonds, reserving him until his triumph, after which he slew him."*

But Rome, which had so often insulted the majesty of fallen royalty, endured in the person of one of her emperors a greater degradation than any which she had inflicted. When the emperor Valerian was taken prisoner by Sapor, king of Persia, his life was spared, but spared that his age might waste in the most humiliating slavery; and when the haughty monarch mounted his horse, he used the prostrate body of his royal captive for a footstool. That, said the haughty Sapor, was a real triumph; not painting imaginary processions upon walls, as the Romans did. To gratify the victor's pride still more, he was compelled to wear the imperial purple and decorations, and in this attire, laden with chains, he followed in the train of Sapor, and exhibited to the whole Persian empire a striking picture of the fallen pride of Rome. This system of insult extended even beyond the grave: his skin is related to have been dyed scarlet, and stuffed, and then placed in a temple as an enduring monument of the shame of Rome. The Christian writers, who alone relate all the particulars of Valerian's humiliation,† see in it the just vengeance of God for his persecution of our faith: the reason, probably, that Gibbon seems inclined to consider the story as a pious fiction. If so, however, it soon obtained currency, for the Emperor Constantine, who flourished not much more than half a century after

* Dion, lib. xl.—Cæsar, in his Commentaries, slurs this transaction over with the mere notice that Vercingetorix was surrendered (viii. 89).

† "Valerian for his persecutions was exposed to insult and reproaches, according to what was spoken to Isaiah, saying, 'They have chosen their own ways, and their soul delighteth in their abominations. I also will choose their delusions, and recompense their sins upon them.'"—*Dionysius of Alexandria*, ap. *Euseb.*, lib. vii. 10.

the event, alludes to it in a letter to the king of Persia :
 " All these emperors (the persecutors of Christianity) have been destroyed by such a dreadful and avenging end, that since their times all mankind doth usually wish their calamities may fall as a curse and punishment upon those who shall study to imitate them. One of which persons I judge him to have been (him, I mean, whom divine vengeance like a thunderbolt drove out of our regions, and conveyed unto your country) who by his own disgrace and ignominy erected that trophy so much boasted of among you."*

Somewhat similar to the indignities offered to Valerian was the treatment which the Sultan Bajazet is said to have experienced from Tamerlane after his defeat and capture.

Closed in a cage, like some destructive beast,
 I'll have thee borne about in public view ;
 A great example of the righteous vengeance
 That waits on cruelty and pride like thine.†

Voltaire and other modern writers have discredited this story, chiefly on the authority of D'Herbelot. It has been shown, however, by Sir W. Jones, that the premises of that distinguished orientalist are false, and his authority therefore falls to the ground. On the other hand, Leunclavius, in his History of the Turks, professes to have heard from an old man, who was in Bajazet's service at the time of his defeat, " that an iron cage was made by Timour's command, composed on every side of iron gratings, through which he could be seen in any direction. He travelled in this den slung between two horses. Whenever Timour and his retinue, on moving his camp, made ready for a journey, he was usually carried before; and after the march, when they dis-

* Euseb., Life of Constantine, lib. iv. 11.

† Tamerlane—a tragedy worth reading, to see the notion which Rowe had of a Tartar chief, and the absurdity produced by treating such subjects with the sentimental bombast of the heroic romance.

mounted, he was placed upon the ground in his cage, before Timour's tent." Poggio also, himself a contemporary, mentions this strange imprisonment as an undoubted fact.*

The English reader will find some countenance for the story in Edward the First's inhuman treatment of the Countess of Buchan. That lady having dared, it is said, in virtue of hereditary privileges, to place the crown of Scotland on the Bruce's head, and afterwards falling into the English monarch's hands, was confined in a cage built upon one of the towers of Berwick Castle, exposed, as it should seem, to the rigour of the elements and the gaze of passers by. One of Bruce's sisters was similarly dealt with. So much for the devoted respect paid to women in the age of chivalry, and that by a prince who, when young, was inferior to none in knightly renown. But the demoralizing effects of absolute power found a fitting subject to work upon in Edward's stern and unforgiving temper. The original order for the Countess's confinement is to this effect :—

“ Ordered and commanded, by letters under the privy seal, to the Chamberlain of Scotland, or his deputy at Berwick-upon-Tweed, that in one of the turrets, upon the castle of that place, in such place as he shall chuse, and shall be most convenient, he do make a cage of

* * M. de Masson asserts (it is to be taken on his authority, not on ours) that he knew a lady of the Russian [court, in the reign of Catherine II., who kept a slave who was her perruquier shut up in a cage in her own chamber. She let him out every day to arrange her head-dress, and locked him up again with her own hands after the business of the toilet was over. His box was placed at her bed-head, and in this fashion he attended her wherever she went. His fare was bread and water. He passed three years in this captivity, the object of which was to conceal from all the world that the lady wore a wig. The close confinement was a punishment for running away from her service; the meagre diet a measure of revenge, because he could not prevent her growing older and uglier every day.—*Mémoires Secrets sur la Russie.*

strong lattice-work and bars, and well strengthened with iron-work, in the which he shall place the Countess of Buchan.

“And that he shall so well and surely guard her in the same cage, that in no manner shall she pass out from it.

“And that he do appoint one or two English women of the said town of Berwick who shall be in no wise suspected, who understand to serve the said Countess with meat and drink, and all things pertaining to her.

“And that he do so well and strictly guard her in the cage, that she speak to none, and that no man or woman of the Scotch nation, nor any other appear before her, but only the woman or women who shall be assigned her, and those who shall have guard of her.

“And that the cage be so made, that the Countess may have there the convenience of a fair chamber, but that it be so well and surely ordered, that no danger may betide in respect of the custody of the said Countess.

“And that he who has care of her be charged to answer for her, body for body, and that he be allowed her expenses.

“In like manner it is ordered that Mary, sister of Robert Bruce, sometime Earl of Carrick, be sent to Roxburgh, to be kept there in the castle, in a cage.”*

The reader will not sympathise much with the harshness of Bajazet's durance, if he knows the character of that redoubtable conqueror. The following passage will convey a fair idea of it, and presents a good specimen of the style of the 15th century :—

“In the year 1396, Sigismond, King of Hungry, sent sweet and amyable letters to the French king by a notable ambassador, a bysshop and two knights of Hungry. In the same letters was containyd a greate parte of the state and doying of the greate Turke (Bajazet), and how that he had sent worde to the King of Hungry, that he would come and fight with him in the middes of his

* Rymer, Fœdera, vol. ii.

realme, and would go fro thens to the cytie of Rome, and would make his horse to eate otes upon the high altar of Saynt Peter, and there to hold his see imperiale. Thus the King of Hungry in his letters prayed the French king to ayde and succour him."* In consequence of this application, a strong body of French and other knights marched into Hungary, under command of John of Burgundy, Earl of Nevers. They crossed the Danube, and after a successful campaign were besieging Nicopolis in union with the Hungarian forces, when Bajazet marched to the relief of that city. The loss of the battle which ensued is attributed by Froissart to the precipitance of the French knights, who led the van, and rushed madly into combat, against the order of the King of Hungary, and without waiting for his support. The biographer of the Marshal Boucicaut, on the other hand, throws the whole blame upon the cowardly desertion of the Hungarians. However this may be, the French charged in a body not exceeding 700 men,† routed the first body of Bajazet's cavalry, and penetrated through a line of stakes, behind which the infantry were formed. "Then the noble Frenchmen, like men already enraged at the loss which they had endured, ran upon them with such valour and hardihood that they frightened all. I may not say how they laid upon them. For never did foaming boar, or angry wolf, shew a fiercer recklessness of life. There the valiant Marshal of France, Boucicaut, among other brave men, thrust himself into the thickest press, and well proved whether he were grieved or no. For there without fail did he so many acts of arms, that all marvelled, and there bore himself so knightly, that whoso saw him still avers there never was any man, knight or other, seen to do in one day more brave and valiant acts than he did then."‡ The Earl of Nevers, the Lord of Coucy, and the other French nobility well approved their valour; but Boucicaut, if we may trust his biographer, was the hero of the day. Mounted on a power-

* Lord Berners's Froissart, vol. ii. chap. 203.

† Froissart.

‡ Hist. de M. Boucicaut.

ful war-horse, he spurred forwards, and struck so fiercely to the right and to the left that he overthrew everything before him. "And ever doing thus, he advanced so far, which is a marvellous thing to relate, and yet true, as all who saw it can bear witness, that he cut through the whole Saracen array, and then returned back through them to his comrades. Heaven, what a knight! God protect his valour! Pity will it be when life shall fail him! But it will not be so yet, for God will protect him. Thus fought our countrymen as long as their strength lasted. Ah, what pity for so noble a company, approved so gentle, so chivalrous, so excellent in arms, which could have succour from no quarter, so ran they in to their enemies' throats, so as is the iron on the anvil!" For they were surrounded and oppressed so fatally on all sides that they could no longer resist. And what wonder? for there were more than twenty Saracens against one Christian! And yet our people killed more than 20,000 of them, but at last they could exert themselves no more. Ah, what a misfortune, what pity! Ought not those disloyal Christians to have been hanged who thus falsely abandoned them? Shame fall upon them, for had they helped the valiant French and their comrades with good will, not Bajazet nor one of his Turks would have escaped death or captivity, which would have been a mighty good to all Christendom.

"Great pity was there again the morrow of this dolorous battle. For Bajazet, sitting within a tent in the midst of the field, caused to be led before him the Earl of Nevers and those of his lineage, with all the French barons, knights, and esquires who remained after the slaughter of that field. Sad was it to see these noble youths, in the prime of life, of blood so lofty as that of the royal line of France, fast bound with ropes, disarmed, in their under doublets, conducted by these ugly, frightful dogs

"*Ains cheurent en la gueule de leurs ennemies, si comme est le fer sur l'enclume.*" It is a queer comparison: the only apparent resemblance is in the thorough beating which they and the iron were both destined to undergo.

of Saracens before the tyrant enemy of the faith who sat there. He knew for certain, through good interpreters, that the Earl of Nevers was grandson and cousin-german to a king of France, and that his father was a duke of great power and wealth, and that others were of the same blood and nearly related to the king. So he be-thought himself, that for preserving them he might have great treasure : therefore he did not put them to death, nor any other of the greatest barons, but made them sit there on the ground before him. Alas ! immediately after began the cruel sacrifice. For then were led before him the noble Christian barons, knights, and esquires, naked ; and then, as they paint on the walls King Herod sitting on a chair, and the Innocents cut in pieces before him, there were our faithful Christians cut in pieces by these Saracen curs before the Earl of Nevers and under his very eyes. So you may understand, you who hear this, what grief went to his heart, good and kind lord as he is, and what pain it gave him to see thus martyred his good and loyal companions, and his people that had been so faithful to him, and who were so distinguished for gallantry. Certes I think he was so grieved at heart, that fain would he have been of their company in that slaughter. And so the Turks led them one after another to martyrdom, as men led in old times the blessed martyrs, and struck their heads and chests and shoulders fearfully with great knives, and felled them without mercy. Well may one know with what woful countenances they went in that sad procession. For even as the butcher drags a lamb to the slaughter, so were our good Christians, without a word being spoken, led to die before the tyrant. But notwithstanding that their death was hard and their case pitiful, every good Christian should esteem them thrice fortunate, and born in a happy hour, to receive such a death. For they must sometime have died, and God gave them grace to die in the advancement of the Christian religion, the holiest and worthiest death (as we in our faith hold) that a Christian can die ; and also he made them to be the companions of the blessed martyrs, the happiest of all the orders of Saints

in Paradise. For there is no doubt but that they are Saints in Paradise, if they met their fate with good will. In this piteous procession was Boucicaut, the Marshal of France, naked, except his small clothes (*petits draps*). But God, who willed not to lose his servant, for the sake of the good service which he was to do thereafter, as well in avenging the death of that glorious company upon the Saracens, as in the other great benefits which were to follow from his talents and by his means, caused the Earl of Nevers to look at the Marshal and the Marshal at him right sorrowfully, at the very moment that some one was about to strike him. Then was the foresaid Earl wonderfully vexed at heart for the death of such a man, and he called to mind the great good, the prowess, loyalty, and valour that were in him. So, on a sudden, God put it in his mind to clasp his hands together as he looked at Bajazet, and he made sign that the Marshal was to him as a brother, and that he should respite him: which sign Bajazet soon understood, and released him. When this stern execution was complete, and the whole field was strewed with the bodies of these blessed martyrs, as many French as others of divers countries, that cursed Bajazet arose, and ordered the Marshal, who had been so respited, to be committed to prison in a large handsome town of Turkey, called Bursa. So his bidding was done, and he was kept there till the arrival of the said Bajazet.”*

Innumerable instances of the like ferocity might be produced from Eastern history. Rowe’s polished and pious Tamerlane [put to death 100,000 persons in the streets of Delhi. Few men have so well and fairly estimated their own character, and the class to which they belong, as did Nadir Shah, when to the remonstrance, “If thou art a king, cherish and protect thy people,—if a prophet, shew us the way of salvation,—if a God, be merciful to thy creatures,” he replied, “I am neither a king to protect my subjects, nor a prophet to teach the way of salvation, nor a God to exercise the attribute of mercy; but I am he whom the Almighty

* Hist. de M.^{de} Boucicaut; première partie, chaps. xxv. xxvi.

has sent in his wrath to chastise a world of sinners." The following anecdote, striking in itself, is the more interesting as an exception to a general rule: "In the year 1068 Alp Arslan, the second sultan of Persia, of the Seljukian dynasty, defeated and took prisoner Romanus Diogenes, husband of Eudocia, the reigning empress of Constantinople. He treated his prisoner with extreme kindness and distinction; he uttered no reproaches that could wound a humbled monarch, but gave vent to the honest indignation of a warrior at the base and cowardly conduct of those who had deserted and abandoned so brave a leader. We are told that he asked his captive at their first conference, what he would have done if fortune had reversed their lot. 'I would have given thee many a stripe,' was the imprudent and virulent answer. This expression of haughty and unsubdued spirit excited no anger in the brave and generous conqueror. He only smiled, and asked Romanus what he expected would be done to him? 'If thou art cruel,' said the emperor, 'put me to death. If vain-glorious, load me with chains, and drag me to thy capital. If generous, grant me my liberty!' Alp Arslan was neither cruel nor vain-glorious: he released his prisoner, gave all his officers who were captives dresses of honour, and distinguished them by every mark of friendship and regard."*

Far from wishing to cast an undue reproach upon the past by these melancholy details of cruelty and suffering, we should have been glad to relieve the narrative by more numerous instances of generosity and mercy. But that these virtues are not the attributes of a savage race, will readily be granted by all: that [they are not necessarily the fruit of refinement and civilization (if that term be applicable to an advanced stage of art and knowledge, without a corresponding improvement in moral wisdom)] is shown by the universal experience of the past, and nowhere more forcibly than in the history of Greece and Rome. The progress of society seems only to have

* Malcolm, History of Persia.

taught one lesson ; that it is better to make the conquered subservient to the profit or amusement of the conqueror, than to put him to death, like any other formidable or offensive animal. In man's earliest and rudest condition, as a hunter, slaves are worse than useless ; for sustenance is of more value than labour, and the precarious supply of the chase is insufficient to provide permanently and plentifully for his own wants. The avenging or preventing encroachments upon each other's hunting-ground is therefore a most frequent cause of warfare among neighbouring tribes, and the massacre of the conquered is prompted equally by revenge and policy. We find accordingly that in North America a prisoner's only chance of escape lay in being adopted into the hostile tribe in the place of some one who had fallen in battle. The still more savage practice of feasting upon prisoners is sufficiently proved to have existed at a very recent period in New Zealand. In other heathen countries they have been reserved from indiscriminate slaughter, only to perish on the altars of false gods. But labour becomes valuable, and the command of labour an advantage, in proportion as men emerge from barbarism, and apply themselves to agriculture, or a pastoral life ; and when it is found out that a prisoner's services may be made worth more than his maintenance, the policy of the victor changes, and he preserves an enemy whom formerly he was almost compelled to destroy. Slavery, therefore, is, in the infancy of nations, an index of increasing civilization, and an amelioration of human misery, since the bulk of mankind have ever hailed with joy a respite from death, even though existence be attended with degradation and suffering. A generous spirit, indeed, would be little gratified at receiving life upon terms of hopeless servitude ; yet even to such the introduction of slave labour lightened the evils of defeat. When men were detained merely for the value of their services, it was natural to release them if an equivalent for that value were paid, and hence arose the custom of admitting prisoners to ransom, which exercised a two-fold influence in favour of slaves : first by enabling them to acquire

freedom at the sacrifice of wealth; secondly, by removing the utter hopelessness and degradation of their state, and introducing a possibility that the slave and master might some day be replaced in their original relation to each other. This practice was familiar in the Homeric age, though revenge or the heat of battle often caused mercy and interest to be alike disregarded. Melancholy indeed was the fate of a captured city. The adult males were usually slaughtered, the females and children reserved for slavery; those even of the highest rank were employed as menial servants in the victor's household. "What evils," says Priam, "does Jupiter reserve me to behold on the threshold of age! My sons slain, my daughters dragged into slavery, my chambers plundered, the very infants dashed against the ground in mournful warfare, and my sons' wives dragged by the destructive hands of the Greeks. The dogs which I fed in my palace, at my own table, to protect it, will tear me, even me, stretched dead at the outer door, as they lie ravening in the vestibule lapping my blood. To a young man it is becoming to lie slain in warfare, pierced by the sharp sword; to such nothing that can happen in death is unseemly. But that dogs should defile the grey head and the grey beard of a slaughtered elder, this is the mournfulest thing that happens to wretched mortals."*

For the lot of those who were reserved, we may quote Hector's parting speech to Andromache:—

I know the day draws nigh when Troy shall fall,
When Priam and his nation perish all:
Yet less forebodings of the fate of Troy,
Her king, and Hecuba, my peace destroy;
Less that my brethren, all th' heroic band,
Should with their blood imbrue their native land;
Than thoughts of thee in tears, to Greece a prey,
Dragged by the grasp of war in chains away,
Of thee in tears, beneath an Argive roof
Labouring reluctant the allotted woof,
Or doomed to draw, from Hypereia's cave,
Or from Messeis' fount, the measured wave.

* Il. xxii. 60—76.

A voice will then be heard which thou must bear,
 ' See'st thou yon captive, pouring tear on tear ?
 Lo ! Hector's wife, the hero bravest far
 When Troy and Greece round Ilion clashed in war.*

As time advanced the Greeks became more humane, and the treatment of their prisoners improved ; insomuch that about the year 500 B. C. it seems to have been usual among the Peloponnesian states to admit each other's citizens to ransom at a fixed sum of two minæ, something less than eight pounds of our money;† and the Athenians released certain Boeotians for the same sum.‡ The meridian splendour of Greece, as we shall have future occasion to notice, is more especially dimmed by the cold-blooded cruelty of her civil wars. It is observable, however, that in the 10th year of the Peloponnesian war, the mutual restoration of prisoners formed a condition in a treaty of peace ; and this, we believe, is the first instance on record at all resembling the humane usage of the present day.

In the youth of Rome, as she gradually extended her dominion, cities were depopulated to be refilled by her citizens, and their inhabitants sold like cattle, by public auction.§ In her days of greatness, when whole kingdoms fell before her, the rights of conquest were necessarily more leniently exercised ; for nations cannot be dispossessed and enslaved in mass. But the number of Greek and of Syrian slaves in Rome shows that the independence of those nations was not overturned without a corresponding loss of private freedom ; and those uncivilised countries, which could contribute little else of wealth to satiate a Roman general's extortion, saw droves of their inhabitants sold into captivity to supply the labourers and gladiators of an idle and dissolute

* vi. 447—461. Sotheby's Homer.

† Weight for weight : to determine the sum which two minæ would correspond to in value is less easy.

‡ Herod. v. 77 ; vi. 79.

§ See the instances of Fidenæ, Liv. iv. 34 ; Veii, v. 22.—*Carthage. Appian.*

empire.* The exemption of modern Europe from these horrors is chiefly referable to the influence of Christianity, which, however ineffectual to purify the minds and lives of a vast majority of those who have outwardly embraced it, has given unquestionable proof of its intrinsic excellence by refining and enlarging men's views of morality and benevolence, wherever its doctrines have not been altogether obscured and corrupted.† It is true that in the reign of Justinian, Constantinople witnessed for the first and only time the insolent splendour of a Roman triumph, granted to Belisarius after the reduction of the Vandal kingdom; on which, as on former occasions, the noblest of the conquered nation, headed by Gelimer, their king, swelled the vainglorious procession. But the changed spirit of the times is shown in the subsequent treatment of them. To the king and his family a safe retirement and an ample estate in Galatia were allotted; and the flower of the Vandal youth were enlisted, and served with distinction in the Persian wars. Among other claims to our gratitude, the clergy of the dark ages have the merit of steadily resisting the practice of enslaving Christians. The working of the feudal system was also beneficial in this respect. The aristocracy of the land were also its soldiery; to make prisoners, therefore, was a greater object than to kill, for the ransom of prisoners was a

* In Epirus, 150,000 persons are said to have been enslaved by L. Æmilius Paulus. In Cæsar's Gallic wars 1,000,000 prisoners were taken and of course sold. (*Plin. Hist. Nat.* vii. 25.) Another million is said to have been slain: but these round numbers may be suspected to be much exaggerated. Upwards of 100,000 Jews, according to Josephus, were reduced to slavery by Titus. Cicero says of Britain, "It is well known that there is not a drachm of silver in the island, and no hope of booty except in slaves; and among them you will hardly find learned men or musicians." *Ad Att.* iv. 16.

† It would be uncandid to pass in entire silence over the two deepest stains perhaps in modern history—the Spanish conquests in America, and the slave trade.

never-failing source of revenue to the brave and powerful. And as the inferior classes might not be reduced to domestic servitude, and besides passed naturally with the land, whether as serfs, in absolute and acknowledged bondage, or as vassals, free in name, but bound to the soil by all the ties of property, the victor had no interest in the detention of prisoners, except such as were able to purchase freedom. The singular institutions of chivalry also exercised a strong influence in humanizing warfare. Knighthood formed a bond of union throughout Europe. Men fought for gain, for honour, for revenge; but victory, which ensured all but the last, was seldom tarnished by cruelty, except in instances of deadly feud. We are by no means inclined to overrate the savage virtues of those times, or to deny that they abound in examples of most flagrant cruelty and oppression; but we contend, that compared with earlier ages, place even barbarism against refinement, the half-savage Teuton against the polished Greek or Roman, we see the tokens of a vast improvement in this respect. And we may further observe that of the cruelties recorded a large proportion are foreign to the question, being perpetrated in prosecution of the cherished spirit of revenge, 'or to extract wealth from Jews, or others of inferior rank, and not on prisoners of war. We do not plead this in extenuation of those enormities; the evil passions of the heart sprung up unchecked into a plentiful harvest of evil actions: but of cruelty to their prisoners of war, the Europeans and the middle ages were comparatively guiltless. Among them, for the first time in history, the victor and the defeated mixed in social intercourse upon terms of equality, without degradation being felt by the one, or an undue and ungenerous superiority assumed by the other; each aware that on the morrow the turn of fortune might reverse their situations, and that disgrace attached to misfortune only when occasioned by misconduct.* And the lofty, though fantastic notions of honour which prevailed, tended still further to

* See, below, the Black Prince's address to John of France.

lighten captivity, when the word of a knight was considered as sufficient surety for his ransom, and prisoners were enabled to obtain their release upon parole. Nowhere is this courteous and humane spirit more strongly marked than in the wars of England and Scotland during the 14th century. Yet we might expect to find the warfare of that century distinguished by more than usual inhumanity. The perfidious aggression, the inveterate hostility of Edward I., were calculated to raise in the Scotch a most implacable resentment; while the obstinate resistance and successful reprisals in which our northern counties were repeatedly devastated, were equally well fitted to inspire the English with no friendly feelings towards their northern brethren. A hundred years had elapsed since the first quarrel, during which the sword had scarcely been sheathed, the fire of burning villages scarcely quenched. We might reasonably then expect to find these wars carried on "à outrance;" to find no mercy in their battles, no gentleness or generosity in their intercourse. But the account of Froissart is very different.

"Englysshmen on the one partye, and scottes on the other partye, are goode men of warre, for when they mete there is a hard fight, without sparynge; there is no troo bytwene them as long as speares, swordes, axes, or daggers wyll endure, but lay on eche upon other; and whan they be well beaten, and that the one parte hath optayned the victory, they then glorifye so in their dedes of armes, and are so ioyfull, that such as be taken, they shall be raunsomed or they go out of the felde, so that shortely eche of them is so content with other, that at their departynge curtoysly they will saye, Gode thank you, but in fyghtynge one with another there is no playe, nor sparynge; and this is trewe, and that shall well apere, by this sayde rencounter (of Otterbourn), for it was as valyauntly foughten as coulde be devysed. This batayle was fierse and cruell, tyll it came to the end of the discomfiture; but whan the scottes saw the englysshmen recule, and yelde themselves, than the scottes were curtes, and sette them to their raunsom,

and every manne sayde to his prisoner, Sirs, go and unarm you and take your ease, I am your mayster; and so made their prisoners as goode chere as though they had been brethern, without doying them any damage."*

Another anecdote of the same battle, from the same graphic and delightful historian, will serve to illustrate more than one of the points to which the reader's attention has been drawn. Sir Matthew Reedman, the governor of Berwick, fought under Percy at Otterbourn and endeavoured to escape when fortune declared against the English.

"Now I shall shewe you of sir Mathue Reedman, who was on horsback to save himselfe, for he alone coude not remedy the mater: at his departing sir James Lynsay was nere to hym, and sawe how sir Mathue departed, and this sir James, to wyn honour, folowed in chase sir Mathue Reedman, and came so nere hym, that he myght have stryken hym with his speare if he had lyst; than he sayd, Ah sir knyght, tourne, it is a shame thus to flye: I am James of Lynsay: if ye will not tourne I shall stryke ye on the back with my spere. Sir Mathue spake no worde, but strake his horse with the spurs sorer than he dyde before. In this maner he chased hym more than thre myles, and at last sir Mathue Reedman's horse foundred and fell under hym: than he stepte forthe on the erthe, and drewe oute his sworde; and took corage to defende hymselfe: and the scotte thought to have stryken him on the brest, but sir Mathue Reedman swarved from the stroke, and the speare poynt entred into the erthe: then sir Mathue strake asonder the spere with his sworde; and whan sir James Lynsay sawe howe he had loste his speare, he caste awaye the tronchon, and lyghted afote, and toke a lytell batayle-axe that he caryed at his backe, and handeled it with his one hande, quickly and delyverly, in the whiche feate scottes be well experte, and than he set at sir Mathue and he defended hymselfe properly. Thus

* Froissart, vol. ii. cap. 142, 145 (138, 141).

they tourneyed toguyder, one with an axe, and the other with a swerde, a long season, and no man to lette them: fynally, sir James Lynsay gave the knyght suche strokes, and helde hym so shorte, that he was putte out of brethe in such wyse that he yelded hymselfe and sayde, Sir James Lynsay, I yelde me to you. Well, quod he, and I receyve you, rescue or no rescue. I am content, quod Reedman, so you deale with me lyke a good companyon. I shall nat fayle that, quod Lynsay, and so putte up his swerde. Well, sir, quod Reedman, what wyll you nowe that I shall do? I am your prisoner, ye have conquered me; I wolde gladly go agayne to Newcastle, and within fyftene dayes I shall come to you into Scotlande, whereas ye shall assigne me. I am content, quod Lynsay: ye shall promyse by your faythe to present yourself within this thre wekes at Edenborowe, and wheresoever ye go, to reporte yourselfe my prisoner. All this sir Mathue sware, and promysed to fulfyll. Than eche of them toke their horses, and toke leave, eche of other. Sir James returned, and his entent was to go to his owne company the same way as he came, and sir Mathue Reedman to Newcastle. Sir James Lynsay could nat keep the ryght waye as he came: it was darke, and a myst, and he hadde nat rydden halfe a myle, but he met face to face with the bysshoppe of Durham and mo than v hundred Englysshmen with hym: he myght wel have escaped, if he had wolde, but he supposed it had been his owne company that had pursued the Englysshmen: whan he was among them, one demaunded of hym what he was. I am, quod he, sir James Lynsay. The bysshoppe herde those words, and stepte to hym, and sayde, Lynsay, ye are taken; yelde ye to me. Who be you? quod Lynsay. I am, quod he, the bysshop of Durham. And fro whens come ye, sir? quod Lynsay. I come fro the batayle, quod the bysshoppe, but I strake never a stroke there; I go back to Newcastle for this night, and ye shall go with me. I may nat chuse, quod Lynsay, sithe you will have it so: I have taken, and I am taken; such is the adventures of armes. Whom have ye taken? quod the bysshop. Sir,

quod he, I toke in the chase sir Mathue Reedman. And where is he ? quod the bysshop. By my faythe, sir, he is retourned to Newcastell : he desyred me to trust hym on his fayth for thre wekes, and so have I done. Well, quod the bysshop, lette us go to Newcastell, and there ye shall spake with hym. Thus they rode to Newcastell toguyder, and sir James Lynsay was prisoner to the bisshop of Durham."

"After that sir Mathue Reedman was retourned to Newcastell, and hadde shewed to dyvers howe he had been taken prisoner by sir James Lynsay ; than it was shewed him howe the bisshoppe of Durham had taken the sayd sir James Lynsay, and how that he was thene in the towne as his prisoner : as sone as the bysshoppe was departed, sir Mathue Reedman wente to the bysshoppes lodgyng to see his mayster, and there he founde hym in a studye, lyeng in a wyndowe, and sayd, What, sir James Lynsay, what make you here ? Than sir James came forth of the studye to hym, and gave hym good morowe, and sayd, By my fayth, sir Mathue, fortune hath brought me hyder ; for as sone as I was departed fro you, I mette by chaunce the bysshoppe of Durham, to whome I am prisoner, as ye be to me. I beleve ye shall nat nede to come to Edenborowe to me to make your fynaunce : I think rather we shall make an exchaunge one for another, if the bysshoppe be so contente. Well, sir, quod Reedman, we shall accorde ryght well toguyder : ye shall dyne this daye with me ; the bysshop and our men be gone forthe to fyght with your men. I can not tell what shall fall ; we shall know at their retourne. I am content to dyne with you, quod Lynsay. Thus these two knyghtes dyned toguyder in Newcastell."*

Some danger unquestionably there was, that where the marketable value of prisoners was so clearly recognised, humanity would be forgotten in avarice ; a lapse of memory which our acquaintance with Algiers and other piratical states proves not altogether impossible.

* Froissart, vol. ii., cap. 146 (142).

One of the causes which prevented this, the union and equality produced by knighthood, has been alluded to; and we may find another in the high-spirited notions of personal honour which prevailed.* To refuse a prisoner his liberty upon payment of ransom, either directly or covertly, by demanding a sum disproportionate to his rank and means, was held dishonourable; for a knight would have esteemed himself disgraced if it could be suspected that he retained an enemy in prison through fear of meeting him in the open field. "After that the Prince of Wales was returned from Spain into Aquitayne, and his brother, the Duke of Lancastre, into Englande, and every lorde into his owne, sir Bertram du Guesclin was styll prisoner with the prince, and with sir Johan Chandos, and coulde nat come to his raunsome, nor fynauce, the whiche was sore displeasaunt to kyng Henry,† if he might have mended it: and it so fortunued after, as I was enformed, that on a day the prince called to hym sir Bertram du Guesclin, and demaunded of hym how he dyde; he answered and sayd, Sir, it was never better with me; it is reason that it shulde be so, for I am in prison with the most renowned knyght of the worlde. With whome is that? sayd the prince. Sir, quoth he, that is with Sir Johan Chandos; and, sir, it is sayd in the realme of Fraunce, and in other places, that ye feare me so moche, that ye dare nat let me out of prison, the whiche to me is full great honour. The prince, who understode well the wordes of sir Bertram du Guesclin, and parceyved well how his own counsaile wolde in no wyse that he shuld delyver hym, unto the

* We cannot deny this merit at least to what is called, vaguely enough, the age of chivalry. Few indeed merited the appellation of Bayard, "*sans peur, et sans reproche*," but many were "*sans peur*," and thereby escaped one most fruitful source of "*reproche*."

† In the contest for the crown of Castile, between Don Pedro and Henry of Transtamara, the former was supported by the Black Prince, the latter by the French under Du Guesclin, who had been taken prisoner by Sir John Chandos.

tyme that king Don Peter had payed him all suche sommes as he was bound to do. Than he sayd to sir Bertram, Sir, then ye thinke that we kepe you for feare of your chivalry; nay, thynke it nat, for I swere by saint George, it is nat so; therefore pay for your raunsome an hundred thousand fraunkes, and ye shall be delyvered. Sir Bertram, who desyred gretly to be delyvered, and herde on what poynt he might depart, toke the prince with that worde, and sayd, Sir, in the name of God so be it, I wyll pay no lasse. And whan the prince herde hym say so, he wolde than gladly have repented hymselfe; and also some of his counsayle came to hym, and sayd, Sir, ye have nat done well so lightly to put him to his raunsome. And so they wolde gladly have caused the prince to have revoked that covenant; but the prince, who was a true and noble knight, sayd, Sithe that we agreed therto, we wyll nat breke our promise; it shulde be to us a grete rebuke, shame and reproche, if we shulde nat put him to raunsome, seyng he is content to pay such a grete somme as an hundred thousand fraunkes.”*

The following story of William Rufus, which is told by William of Malmesbury, illustrates the character of the man, rather than the spirit of the age. Helias de Flechia laid claim to the city of Mans, part of that monarch's continental possessions. He was taken and brought before William, who said insultingly, “I have you, sir.” “You have taken me by chance,” said the baron; “could I escape, I should find something new to do.” The hot-headed king, shaking his fist, replied, “You rascal, what would you do? Troop, shog off,

* Froissart, vol. i. chap. 239. Subjoined to the chapter the reader will find another version of this story, taken from a most amusing book, entitled ‘*Mémoires de Messire Bertrand du Guesclin.*’ The passage from Froissart, which illustrates the same point in a much smaller compass, seemed better fitted for insertion in the text; but the other gives such a minute and pleasant representation of manners, that we cannot altogether omit it; and it is too long for a note.

make yourself scarce—you may do what you can; and by the face of St. Luke, if you get the better of me, I will ask you nothing for this favour.”*

In conclusion we give a celebrated passage from English history, which is strongly and pleasantly contrasted with the early part of the chapter. It is well known that the king of France was taken prisoner by the Black Prince at the battle of Poitiers. “The day of the batayle at night, the prince made a supper in his lodginge to the frenche kyng, and to the moost parte of the great lordes that were prisoners: the prince made the kyng, and his son, the lorde James of Bourbon, the lorde John D’Artois, the erle of Tancarville, the erle D’Estampes, the erle Dampmertyne, the erle of Gravyll, and the lorde of Pertenay, to syt all at one borde, and other lordes, knyghtes, and squiers at other tables; and alwayes the prince served before the kyng as humbly as he coude, and wolde nat syt at the kynges borde, for any desyre that the kyng could make: but sayd he was nat sufficient to syt at the table with so great a prince as the kyng was; but than he sayd to the kyng, Sir, for goddes sake make none yvell, nor heavy chere, though god this day dyd not consent to folowe your wyll: for syr, surely the kyng my father shall bere you as moche honour and amyte as he may do, and shall acorde with you so reasonably that ye shall ever be frendes toguyder after; and sir, methinke ye ought to reioyse, though the journey† be nat as ye wolde have had it, for this day ye have wonne the hygh renome of prowes, and have past this day in valyantnesse all other of your partie: sir, I say natte this to mocke you, for alle that be on our partie that saw every mannes dedes are playnly acorded by true sentence to gyve you the price and chapelette. Therewith the frenchemen began to murmure, and sayd among themselves how the prince had spoken nobly; and that by all estimation he shulde prove a noble man, if Gode send him lyfe, to perceyver in such good fortune. Whan supper was done, every

* Lib. iv. † Fr. journée—though the day has not gone, &c.

man went to his lodgyng with their prisoners : the same night they put many to raunsome, and beleved them upon their faythes and trouthes, and raunsomed them but easily, for they sayde, *they wolde sette no knyghts raunsom so hygh, but that he might pay at his ease and mayntaygne still his degree.*

“The same wynter the prince of Wales, and such of Englande as were with him at Bardeaux, ordayned for shippes, to convey the frenche king and his son and all other prisoners into Englande. Then he took the see, and certayne lordes of Gascoyne with hym : the frenche kyng was in a vessell by hymselfe, to be the more at hys ease, accompanied with two hundred men at arms, and two thousand archers : for it was showed the prince that the thre estates, by whom the realme of France was governed, had layed in Normandy and Crotoy two great armyes to the entent to mete with hym, and to gette the frenche kyng out of his handes if they might : but there were no such that apered, and yet thei were on the see xi dayes, and on the xii day they aryved at Sandwyche ; then they yssued out of their shyppe, and lay there all that nyghte, and taryed there two dayes to refresh them ; and on the therde day they rode to Canterbury. When the kynge of Englande knew of their commynge, he commaunded them of London to prepare theym, and their cyte, to receyve suche a man as the frenche kyng was : then they of London arrayed themselfe, by companyes, and the chief maisters clothing different fro the other ; at saynt Thomas of Canterbury the frenche kyng and the prince made their offerynges, and there taryed a day, and than rode to Rochester, and taryed there that day, and the next day to Dartforde, and the fourth day to London, wher they were honourably receyved, and so they were in every good towne as they passed : the frenche kynge rode through London on a whyte courser, well aparelled, and the prince on a lyttell black hobby by hym : thus he was conveyed along the cyte till he came to the Savoy, the which house pertayned to the heritage of the duke of Lancaster ; there the frenche kynge kept hys house a long season, and

thyder came to se hym the kyng and the quene ofttimes, and made him great feest and chere."*

It has been said that the Prince's conduct was too ostentatiously humble; that in refusing to sit at table with the King of France, and in making him the principal object of attention in their entry into London, he exceeded the modesty of a conqueror, and exposed himself to the charge of hypocrisy. The censure is, we think, erroneous, and arises from ignorance of the feelings of the times. The humility of the Black Prince was that of a vassal in presence of his feudal lord, due, not because he owed allegiance to the King of France, but because that monarch was the peer of the King of England, and in courtesy entitled, especially as a visitor, though a forced one, to an equal measure of respect from his subjects. The victor merely overlooked the fortune of war, and paid to his royal prisoner the homage which he would have shown to his father, and which the King of France would have received from the heir to his own crown.

* Lord Berners's Froissart, vol. i. chap. 168, 169, 173.

EXTRACT FROM THE LIFE OF MESSIRE BERTRAND DU GUESCLIN.

(Referred to in the Note, p. 104.)

“ONE day the Prince of Wales was risen from dinner, and gone into a private chamber with his barons, who had been served with wine and spices. So they began to speak of many a bold deed of arms, of love-passages, of battles, and of prisons, and how St. Louis to save his life was made prisoner in Tunis, from whence he was ransomed for fine gold, paid down by weight. Until the Prince, who spoke without caution, said, ‘When a good knight well approved in battle is made prisoner in fair feat of arms, and has rendered himself, and sworn to abide prisoner, he should on no account depart without his master’s leave. And also one should not demand such portion of his substance, that he be unable to equip himself again.’ When the Sire de Le Bret heard these words, he began to take heed, and said to him, ‘Noble Sire, be not angry with me if I relate what I have heard said of you in your absence.’ ‘By my faith,’ said the Prince, ‘right little should I love follower of mine sitting at my table, if he heard said a word against my honour, and apprised me not of it.’ ‘Sire,’ said he of Le Bret, ‘men say that you hold in prison a knight whose name I well know, whom you dare not delyver.’ ‘It is true,’ said Oliver de Clisson, ‘I have heard speak of it.’ Then the Prince swore and boasted, ‘that he knew no knight in the world, but, if he were his prisoner, he would put him to a fair ransom, according to his ability.’ And Le Bret said, ‘How then do you forget Bertrand du Guesclin, that he cannot get away?’ And when the Prince heard this, his colour changed; and he was so tempted by pride, anger,

and disdain, that he commanded Bertrand to be brought before him ; with whom he wished to make terms, in spite of all who had spoken of the matter, and would fain not let him be ransomed, unless they themselves should fix the amount. Then certain knights went and found Bertrand, who, to amuse himself and forget his weariness, was talking with his chamberlain. Which knights saluted him. And Bertrand arose towards them, and showed a fair seeming, saying ' that they were come in good time.' Then he ordered the aforesaid chamberlain to bring wine. The knights answered ' that it was right fitting they should have much wine, good and strong ; for they brought him good, joyful, and pleasant news with good will.' Then one of them who was wise and discreet said, ' that the Prince sent for him to appear in his presence, and he thought that he would be ransomed by help of those friends he had at court, who were many.' ' What say you ?' said Bertrand ; ' I have neither halfpenny nor penny, and owe more than ten thousand livres, that have been lent me, which debt has accrued in this city while I have been prisoner.' One of them inquired of him, ' How have you accounted for so much ?' ' I will answer for that,' said Bertrand ; ' I have eaten, drunk, given, and played at dice with it. A little money is soon spent. But if I be set free, I shall soon have paid it : he saves his money, and has it in good keeping, who shall for my help lend me the keys of it.' And an officer who heard him said, ' Sir, you are stout-hearted, it seems to you that every thing which you would have must happen.' ' By my faith,' said Bertrand, ' you are right, for a dispirited man is nothing better than beaten and discomfited.' And the rest said, ' that he was like one enchanted, for he was proof against every shock.' Then he was brought to the chamber where was the Prince of Wales, and with him John Chandos, a true and valiant knight. And had they chosen to believe him, they would long before have disposed of the war : for he gave much good advice. And also there were Oliver de Clisson and other knights, before whom came Bertrand, wearing a grey coat. And

when the Prince saw him, he could not keep from laughing, from the time he saw him. Then he said, 'Well, Bertrand, how fare you?' And Bertrand approached him, bowing a little, and said, 'Sir, when it shall please you, I may fare better: many a day have I heard the rats and mice, but the song of birds it is long since I heard.* I shall hear them when it is your pleasure.' 'Bertrand,' said the Prince, 'that shall be when you will; it will depend only on yourself, so that you will swear, and make true oath, never to bear arms against me, nor these others, nor to assist Henry of Spain. So soon as you will swear this, we will fully set you free, and pay that you owe, and besides give 10,000 florins to equip you anew, if you consent to this; else you shall not go.' 'Sire,' said Bertrand, 'my deliverance then will not come to pass; for before I do so, may I lie by the leg in prison while I live. God willing, I will never be a reproach to my friends. For by Him who made the world, I will serve with my whole heart those whom I have served, and whose I have been from my outset. These are the good King of France, the noble Dukes of Anjou, of Berry, of Burgundy, and of Bourbon; whose I have been, as became me. But so please you, suffer me to go. For you have held me too long in prison, wrongfully and without cause; and I will tell you how I had gone from France, I and my people meaning to go against the Saracens. And so I had promised Hugh de Carvalay, intending to work out my salvation.' 'Why then went you not straight without stopping?' said the Prince. 'I will tell you,' said Bertrand in a loud voice. 'We found Peter, — the curse of God confound him! who had long since thrice falsely murdered his noble Queen, born of the noble line of Bourbon, and of the blood of my Lord, St. Louis, which lady

* This expression will remind the reader of a favourite saying of the "Good Sir James" Douglas, the companion of Robert Bruce's dangers, that "It is better to hear the lark sing, than the mouse cheep:" meaning that he would never shut himself up in a castle while he could keep the open field.

was your cousin by the best blood in your body. Straightway then I stopped, to take vengeance for her, and to help Henry ; for well I know, and surely I believe, that he is the right king and the true heir of Spain. And also to destroy, and put to an end, Jews and Saracens, of whom there are too many in these parts. Now through great pride you have come to Spain to the best of your ability, both through covetousness of gold and silver, and that you may have the throne after the death of Peter, who reigns wrongfully, by which journey you have, in the first place, injured your own blood, and troubled me and my people : whence it has come to pass, that after you have so ruined your friends, and you and your people have been all famished, and suffered great pain and labour, Peter has deceived you by cheating and trickery, for he has not kept faith nor covenant with you, for which, by my faith, I thank him heartily.' When Bertrand had related his reasons, the Prince rose, and could not help saying that on his soul Bertrand was right, and the barons said that he had spoken truth. Then was there great joy stirring all round and about, and they said of Bertrand, one to another, ' See there a brave Breton.' But the Prince called, and said to him, ' You shall not escape me without paying a good ransom ; and yet it vexes me that you obtain such favour. But men say that I keep you prisoner because I fear you ; and to the end that every one may cease to suspect this, and may know that I neither fear nor care for you, I will deliver you on payment of sufficient ransom.' ' Sir,' said Bertrand, ' I am a poor knight of little name, and not so born as that I should find help in plenty. And besides, my estate is mortgaged for purchase of war-horses, and also I owe in this town full ten thousand florins. Be moderate, therefore, and deliver me.' ' Where will you go, fair Sir ?' said the Prince. ' Sir,' said Bertrand, ' I will go where I may regain my loss, and more I say not.' ' Consider then,' said the Prince, ' what ransom you will give me : for what you will shall be enough for me.' ' Sir,' said Bertrand, ' I trust you will not stoop to retract your meaning. And since you are content to refer it to my

pleasure, I ought not to value myself too low. So I will give and engage for my freedom one hundred thousand double golden florins.' And when the Prince heard him his colour changed, and he looked round at his knights, saying, 'Does he mean to make game of me that he offers such a sum? for I would gladly quit him for the quarter.' 'Bertrand,' said he, 'neither can you pay it, nor do I wish such a sum; so consider again.' 'Sire,' said Bertrand, 'since you will not so much, I place myself at sixty thousand double florins; you shall not have less, so be it you will discharge me.' 'Well,' said the Prince, 'I agree to it.' Then said Bertrand loudly, 'Sir, Prince Henry may well and truly vaunt that he will die King of Spain, cost him what it may, and he will lend me one half my ransom, and the King of France the other; and if I can neither go nor send to these two, I would get all the spinstresses in France to spin it rather than that I should remain longer in your hands.* And when the Prince had heard him he thus said: 'What sort of man is this? He startles at nothing, either in act or thought, no more than if he had all the gold which is in the world. He has set himself at sixty thousand double florins, and I would willingly have quitted him for ten thousand.' And all the barons also marvelled greatly. 'Am I then at liberty?' said the gallant Bertrand. And Chandos asked him whence the money should come. 'Sir,' said he, 'I have good friends, as I shall find, I am certain.' 'By my faith,' said Chandos, 'I am much rejoiced therefore, and if you have need of my help, thus much I say, I will lend you ten thousand.' 'Sir,' said Bertrand, 'I thank you. But before I seek anything of you I will try the people of my own country.' The news of this matter went through the city of Bordeaux. There you might see all persons, great and small, citizens, and artisans of all sorts, run towards the mansion of the Prince to see Bertrand. And when the Prince's knights saw the people assemble thus, and

* Si le gaigneroie aincois a filler toutes les fillereses qui en France sont, que ce que je demourasse plus entre vos mains.

knew the cause of their coming, they brought the said Bertrand to lean out at a window, who laughed heartily at the matter. And when the commoners saw him from a distance, they said, 'He is a downright enemy! cursed be the hour that he escapes alive. He has done much evil, and will do worse.' And others said, 'Have we idled and yawned, and run away from our business, to look at such a squire as this? May God bless him not! for he is an ugly fellow, and unable to pay the ransom at which he is valued.' 'Whence should he draw it?' said others; 'he will never pay a single penny of his own, but will pilfer it through the broad land.' And those who knew Bertrand better said to them, 'Now argue not so much in using such words, for there is no better knight in the world, and none that better knows how to make war. And there is no castle, however strong, however high the rock on which it stands, that would not soon surrender if he went thither to assault it: and, throughout the kingdom of France, there is no man nor woman, however poor, who would not contribute, if he needed it, rather than that he should remain in prison.'" *

* Hist. du Messire Bertrand du Guesclin.



CHAPTER IV.

**Tyranny of Cambyzes, terminating in madness—of Caligula
—of the Emperor Paul.**

No questions which can become the subject of judicial examination are more delicate and difficult than those which depend upon a man's mental sanity, whether the case be of a civil or a criminal nature; whether it regard his competence to manage his own affairs, or his possession of that moral feeling of right and wrong in the absence of which he cannot be justly punished as a responsible agent. In the first instance, daily experience shows us that general eccentricity, and even delusion upon particular subjects, may exist in union with the most acute perception of personal interests; in the second, it is equally clear that the moral sense may be perverted upon one or more points without being destroyed, and indeed without any other indication of mental disease. We may take as an example of this the burning of York Cathedral some years ago. Martin believed this to be morally a meritorious act, and herein lay his madness: on a case of murder, robbery, or any other infraction of the laws, he would have judged aright. But though he believed it to be meritorious, he knew it to

be illegal ; he knew that he was subject to punishment, and fled from it accordingly : and upon this ground the question might be raised, whether his madness should have protected him from the penalty affixed to his act. But exclusively of those more strongly marked cases, which alone are likely to become subjects of judicial inquiry, no man can converse extensively with the living, or, through the medium of books, with the dead, without continually asking himself whether the eccentricity, perverseness, intemperance, and extravagance which he sees on all sides are compatible with a perfectly sound state of mind. Mental as well as bodily illness may assume all shapes, and be of all degrees : and both reflection and observation lead us to conclude that excessive indulgence of the passions will impair the understanding, as surely as sensual intemperance injures the constitution. It would not be difficult to enumerate a long list of causes tending more or less to unsettle the reason ; indeed, no pursuit, however unexciting it may seem, can be exclusively followed without risk of this result. Science has its dangers as well as love : the philosopher's stone and the quadrature of the circle have probably turned as many heads as has female ingratitude, from the time of Orlando Furioso downwards. At present, however, we mean to confine ourselves to one particular manifestation of insanity, or something nearly allied to it, with the view of illustrating, in some degree, that large portion of history which is occupied by the crimes and follies of absolute monarchs.

In reading such narratives as the following, we naturally wonder how it is that anything human can have been led to play a part so entirely at variance with all the kindly feelings of human nature. To believe that Caligula and Nero came into the world fully prepared for the part which they were afterwards to play, would be as unreasonable as to adopt the other extreme, and maintain, as some have done, that the tempers and abilities of all men are originally similar and equal. But "the child is father of the man." The work of education begins at an early period, and circumstances seemingly

too trivial to notice, may exert a powerful effect in fixing our future destiny for good or evil. There are few persons whose patience has not been more or less tried by spoiled children, and who cannot point out examples where the temper of the mature man has been seriously injured by early injudicious indulgence; and many must know cases in which the paroxysms of a naturally bad temper, exasperated by uncontrolled licence and habitual submission, have amounted almost to occasional insanity. Causes closely analogous to those which render one man the dread of his domestic circle, may render another the terror and the scourge of half the earth. The same spirit which vents itself in ill-humour for a broken piece of china, or execrations for an ill-cooked dinner, if fostered by power, might correct breaches of etiquette with the knout, and deal out confiscations and death as unsparingly as oaths. We may observe that, bloody and unfeeling as their administration may have been, it is not among the adventurers who have carved their own way to a crown that the wantonness of tyranny has been most developed; it is rather among their descendants, men nurtured among parasites, with the prospect of despotism ever before their eyes. Surrounded from infancy by those whose interest it has been to pamper, not to repress their evil passions, taught, in Pagan countries, to regard themselves as gods, and worshipped as such by a servile and besotted multitude, what wonder that they tread under foot those who bow the neck before them, and scorn to sympathise with a confessedly inferior race? In private life, however, the regulation of the mind may be neglected, the supremacy of law, and the knowledge that excess, beyond a certain point, cannot be committed with impunity, exerts a salutary restraint over the wildest spirits. But he who is above the influence of fear, whose angry passions have never been checked, nor his desires controlled, and who is harassed by the craving after excitement consequent upon satiety of sensual pleasures, is prepared for any caprice or enormity which the humour of the moment may suggest. The mind can hardly be thus morally

depraved without becoming intellectually depraved also : as the animal man is cherished, and the reasonable man neglected, the former will assume the guidance due to the latter, and human becomes little superior to brute nature, except in its greater power to do mischief. In this state of degradation

Even-handed justice
Condemns the ingredients of the poisoned chalice
To our own lips.

The dominion of the passions is worse than external oppression, and conscience exasperates, after it has lost its power to reform. Misery may then complete the ruin which intemperance began, and cruelty, from being only indifferent, become congenial.

If a man deprives himself almost of the common necessities of life, for the purpose of accumulating money which he will never use or want ; if he sleeps all day, and wakes all night ; if he chooses to wear his shoes upon his hands, and his gloves upon his feet, or indulge in any other such ridiculous fancies ; we call him odd, eccentric, a madman, according to the degree of his deviation from established usages : and justly, for in all these things a sound mind is wanting. Yet that man may be perfectly able to foresee the consequences of his actions, perfect master of his reason upon every subject ; and therefore be both legally and morally responsible. It is a state of mind strictly analogous, as we believe, to this, which has produced the worst excesses of the worst oppressors ; and one which has sprung from the same cause—habitual submission to the will instead of the reason. From the childish passion of George II., who manifested his displeasure on great occasions by kicking his hat about the room, to the super-human crimes of Caligula, we find this disease, if we may call it so, manifested in every variety of degree and form. In Henry VIII. of England, we trace it in the contrast between the early and later years of his reign, in the increased violence of his passions, and in the capriciousness and cruelty ingrafted on a temper not

naturally ungentle. We ascribe to it the ungovernable fury which obscured the brilliant qualities of Peter of Russia ; and we find it still more strongly marked in the extravagances which are ascribed to Xerxes. His very preparations for invading Greece, on a scale so disproportionate to the value of his object if attained, show how subordinate was his judgment to his inclinations ; and no one can read the narration of his chastisement of the Hellespont, without recognising the weakness of a mind unsettled by extravagant presumption. " When Xerxes heard that his bridges were carried away, he was much vexed, and ordered three hundred lashes to be given to the Hellespont, and a pair of fetters to be cast into it. And I have heard that he sent men at the same time to brand the Hellespont. Moreover, he commanded those that inflicted the stripes to use unholy and barbarian language, saying, ' Thou bitter water, thy master inflicts this punishment upon thee, because thou hast wronged him, having received no injury at his hands. And King Xerxes will cross thee, whether thou wilt or no : and, as is fit, no one sacrifices to thee, because thou art a salt and crafty river.' So he ordered them to punish the sea thus, and to cut off the heads of the Grecians who had charge of the bridge."* This is as downright frenzy as the walls of Bedlam ever witnessed : a paroxysm of temporary insanity, produced by disappointment acting on a vain, ungoverned mind.

Before proceeding to relate in detail the lives of some remarkable persons which bear upon the point in question, we wish briefly to allude to the very singular and striking history of Nebuchadnezzar, though with no view of resolving that preternatural visitation, which is expressly stated to have been from God, into a natural consequence of his intemperate pride. From the few notices of him preserved in the Bible, he seems to have been a man cast in no ordinary mould ; to have been endowed with powers and capability of excellence commensurate with the exalted situation which he was ap-

* Herod. vii. 35.

pointed to hold. It is evident, however, that he had drunk deep of the intoxication of despotism. His intended massacre of the wise men, and the Chaldeans, in point of wisdom and justice is on a par with the anger of a child who beats his nurse because she will not give him the moon to play with; and his conduct with respect to the image of the plain of Dura, if less preposterous, is not more creditable to his notions of toleration or humanity. In fact, he appears to have been in a fair way to become as truculent a tyrant as Cambyses or Caligula, when that awful vision, related at length in the fourth chapter of Daniel, was presented to him, which foretold his banishment from the throne and from men: and we may infer from the warning of the inspired interpreter, and from the course of the narrative, that his overweening pride and hardness of heart, the food and origin of that mental alienation of which we have been speaking at such length, were the vices against which Divine anger was especially directed. "This is the decree of the Most High, which is come upon my lord the king: They shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, till thou know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will. Wherefore, O king, let my counsel be acceptable unto thee, and break off thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by showing mercy to the poor: if it may be a lengthening of thy tranquillity. At the end of twelve months he walked in the palace of the kingdom of Babylon. The king spoke and said, Is not this the great Babylon that I have built for the house of the kingdom, by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty? While the word was in the king's mouth, there fell a voice from heaven, saying, O King Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken; the kingdom is departed from thee. And they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field; they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and seven times shall pass over thee, until thou know that

the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will.”*

Of the following sketches the two first exhibit the dominion of passion in its most violent form; the last differs rather in degree than in nature. Strictly speaking, the life of Cambyzes is not entitled to a place here; but Herodotus makes us so familiar with Persian history from the time of Cyrus, that it seems naturally to find a place in works relating to the history of Greece.

Cambyzes succeeded to the undisturbed possession of that vast empire which his father Cyrus had acquired, extending from the Indus to the Ægean, and from the Caspian to the Red Sea. This extent of dominion might seem enough to satisfy the most ambitious, and employ the most active mind; but the son, unhappily for himself, inherited the father's military spirit, and in the fourth year of his reign quitted his paternal kingdom to conquer Egypt. He marched along the coast from Palestine to Pelusium, where he found encamped Psammenitus, who had succeeded his father Amasis on the Egyptian throne. A battle was fought, in which the Egyptians were defeated; they fled to Memphis, and the rest of the country submitted without further struggle. Herodotus, who visited the field of battle, relates a curious story. The bones of either nation were heaped apart, as they had been originally separated; and the Persian skulls were so weak that you could throw a pebble through them, whereas the Egyptian would hardly break, though beaten with a large stone. Their descendants do not appear to have degenerated in this respect.

Cambyzes sent a ship of Mitylene up the Nile, to summon Memphis to surrender. The savage and exasperated inhabitants tore the herald and crew limb from limb, and made a long defence, during which the Cyrenæans and the neighbouring Libyans submitted. The city being at last taken, he put Psammenitus to a singular trial.

“On the tenth day after the capture of Memphis, he

* Daniel, iv. 24, 25, 27, 29—32.

placed Psammenitus, together with other Egyptians, without the gates; and meaning to make essay of his temper, he acted thus. He clothed that king's daughter in servile raiment, and sent her, bearing a water-pitcher, to fetch water, and with her other maidens of the noblest families similarly clad. And as they went with wailing and lamentation past their fathers, these, all but Psammenitus, re-echoed their cries, seeing the evil condition of their children; but he bowed his head to the earth. When they had passed, his son came by with two thousand Egyptians of like age, with bits in their mouths, and their necks bound with halters, who were thus led to death in retaliation for the Mityleneans who were slain at Memphis. For the royal judges had decided that for every one of them ten of the noblest Egyptians should perish. And he, seeing them pass, and knowing that his son was carried to execution, while his countrymen who were around him wept and were much distressed, did as in the case of his daughter. When they were gone, an old man, who was formerly of his drinking parties, being now deprived of his fortune, and compelled to beg through the army, chanced to come where Psammenitus was sitting; and Psammenitus, when he saw his friend, cried aloud, and smote his head, calling upon him by name. Men were placed near, who told Cambyses every thing that happened; and he was much surprised, and sent this message: 'Psammenitus, your master Cambyses asks why, having given way neither to cries nor tears when you saw your daughter maltreated and your son going to execution, you have honoured with them a man nowise related to you?' He answered, 'Son of Cyrus, my domestic misfortunes were too mighty to be wept; but the sufferings of a friend, who, on the threshold of old age, has fallen from a high and happy state into beggary, form a fit subject for tears.'*" The heart of Cambyses was touched for once, and he ordered the Egyptian prince to be sought and saved; but his mercy came too late.

* Herod. iii. 14

Proceeding from Memphis to Sais, he broke open the tomb of Amasis, the late king, and caused the body, which was embalmed as usual, to be scourged, and insulted in every possible way.* Finally, he ordered it to be burnt, wherein he transgressed equally the religion of the Persians and Egyptians. For the former say that it is not fit to consign a dead man to a divinity, esteeming fire as such; while the latter believe it to be a savage animal, which consumes every thing within its reach, and then dies; and consider it unlawful to let their corpses be the prey of wild beasts. Hence the practice of embalming, that worms may not prey upon their flesh. This wanton and disgusting outrage was prompted by personal hatred, arising from a slight said to have been put upon him by Amasis, in consequence of which the invasion of Egypt was undertaken.

That country being subdued, far from being contented with his acquisitions, he now meditated three expeditions at once: one against Carthage, which was frustrated by the Phœnicians, who composed the chief part of his fleet, refusing to serve against their kinsmen and descendants; another against the Ammonians, who lived in the Libyan desert, in a spot made famous by the oracle of Ammon;† a third against the Æthiopians, called Macrobii, or long-lived, who were said to be the tallest and handsomest of all men, and to reach the age of 120 years and upwards. The monarchy was elective, and they chose for their king whoever was most eminent for strength and stature. Before he set out, Cambyses sent spies into this country, charged with gifts and professions of friendship, to which the Æthiopian replied, "The king of Persia has not sent you with gifts, as setting a high price on my alliance; and you speak falsely, for you

* * The body of Cromwell was taken from the grave, exposed on a gibbet, and finally buried under the gallows, and this in the gay and polished reign of Charles II., who had not even the poor excuse for this despicable revenge which the Persian king's unbridled passions may supply.

† The modern Siwah.

are come as spies of my realm. Neither is that man upright, for then he would covet none other country than his own, and not have enslaved those from whom he has had no wrong. Give to him, then, this bow, and say, 'The king of the Æthiopians advises the king of the Persians to invade the long-lived Æthiopians with overpowering numbers, as soon as the Persians can draw thus easily such bows as these; and, until then, to thank the gods who have not inclined the sons of the Æthiopians to add the lands of others to their own.'"

Cambyses, as we may suppose, flew into no small passion at the receipt of such an answer, and urged his march, says Herodotus, like one out of his right mind, and too impetuously to wait until magazines could be formed,—a precaution the more needful, because, according to the prevalent notions of geography, he was going to the uttermost parts of the earth. From Thebes he detached 50,000 men to enslave the Ammonians, and burn the temple of Ammon, while he advanced towards Æthiopia with the rest: but before one-fifth of the journey was accomplished, all their food was consumed, even to the beasts of burden which attended the camp. "If, when he found this out, he had changed his mind, and brought home his army, then, bating the original fault, he would have been a wise man. But, instead of this, he pressed continually forward, without any consideration."

The consequence of this improvident obstinacy was, that his soldiers, who had lived on herbs so long as the earth produced anything, began to live upon each other when they reached the sandy desert. Cambyses had no relish for this sort of supper, whether he was to eat, or, like Polonius, to be eaten, and at length turned back, not before he had lost a large part of his army. The other detachment advanced deep into the desert, whence they returned not, nor was it known what became of them. The Ammonians said that a mighty south-west wind had overwhelmed them with sand. The circum-

stances of their supposed destruction are powerfully though rather extravagantly described by Darwin :—

“ Now o’er their head the whizzing whirlwinds breathe,
And the live desert pants and heaves beneath ;
Tinged by the crimson sun, vast columns rise
Of eddying sands, and war amid the skies,
In red arcades the billowy plain surround,
And stalking turrets dance upon the ground.
Onward resistless rolls the infuriate surge, :
Clouds follow clouds, and mountains mountains urge ;
Wave over wave the driving desert swims ;
Bursts o’er their heads, inhumes their struggling limbs ;
Man mounts on man, on camels camels rush,
Hosts march o’er hosts, and nations nations crush,—
Wheeling in air the winged islands fall,
And one great earthy ocean covers all !—
Then ceased the storm.—Night bowed his Ethiop brow
To earth, and listened to the groans below.—
Grim Horror shook—awhile the living hill
Heaved with convulsive throes—and all was still ! ”*

The king returned to Memphis, his army much weakened, and his warlike ardour probably no less cooled, by this double failure ; for he made no more trials to extend his empire. So humiliating a disappointment was not likely to sweeten his arbitrary temper, and to its effects we are inclined to attribute the sudden change which appears to have taken place in his conduct. We say appears, because up to this time nothing is related of his private life : it is not probable, however, that the historian would have omitted occurrences such as those which characterise it from henceforward. The seeds of the evil which now shot up had long been rooting themselves. Self-gratification had been the end, and his will the guide, of his actions ; and on such persons uncontrolled power acts like a hot-bed, to draw up their bad qualities into tenfold rankness. Old tales make frequent mention of magicians being torn in pieces by the spirits whom they have called up. He who gives loose to the evil passions of his nature, has a worse set of fiends to

* Botanic Garden, v. 473.

deal with, than the grotesque imaginations of our forefathers ever figured, and will find it harder to escape from them in safety: what wonder is it if the reason proves unequal to bear the shocks of such a warfare? That the mind of Cambyzes so yielded, the cruelty, impiety, and extravagance of his latter years, in which his conduct was as impolitic as wicked, will not allow us to doubt. Disappointment and vexation could not have produced the disorder, though they may have hastened the crisis and increased its violence.

The Egyptians referred this change to another cause. When Cambyzes reached Memphis he found the city in great joy. Apis,* the sacred bull, one of their most venerated deities, had just appeared, and, as usual, the whole country celebrated it as a festival. The despot suspected, not unnaturally, that they were rejoicing over his defeat, and sent for the magistrates, to ask why the Egyptians, who had done nothing of the sort when he was before at Memphis, made such show of joy, now that he came there after losing his army. They replied, that their god, who was wont to appear at long intervals, had manifested himself, and that on this occasion the Egyptians always kept holiday. Cambyzes said they lied, and therefore sent them to execution. He next sent for the priests, and being similarly answered, said that he would soon know whether any tame god was come among the Egyptians. At his command, the animal was produced; he drew his dagger, struck Apis in the thigh, and said, laughing, "Fools, are such things gods, composed of flesh and blood and penetrable to

* Apis was a black calf, with a square white spot on its forehead, the figure of an eagle on its back, a double tuft of hair on its tail, and the figure of the cantharus, the sacred beetle, under its tongue. When an animal bearing these marks was found, or manufactured, the birth of Apis was announced to the people, a temple was built on the spot, where he was fed for four months, and after various ceremonies he was finally conveyed to Memphis, where he spent the rest of his life in a splendid palace, receiving divine honours.

steel? He is indeed a god worthy of the Egyptians! For you, you shall not make a mock of me with impunity." So saying, he ordered the priests to be scourged, and all persons found celebrating the feast to be slain. Apis died, and was buried secretly. From this sacrilege the Egyptians dated the madness of Cambyses. Others ascribed it to epilepsy, to which he is said to have been subject from his birth. The disease might have produced a liability to insanity, but it could scarcely have been the agent in working so sudden a change. The extravagances of Caligula, however, were referred by many to the same cause.

The change in his temper was first shown by the murder of his brother Smerdis, whom he had sent back to Susa in a fit of jealousy because he was the only man in the army who could draw the King of Ethiopia's bow, even for two fingers' breadth. After taking this step, he dreamed that a messenger came to him from Persia, with tidings that Smerdis sat upon the throne, and touched the heavens with his head. Fearing, therefore, that this vision portended his being deposed and murdered, he sent a trusty follower, named Prexaspes, to Susa, with orders to assassinate his brother. The commission was faithfully performed.

A sister also, who had followed him into Egypt, and with whom he cohabited, fell a victim to his intemperate passion. "Before this time," Herodotus says, "the Persians never married their sisters, but he, wishing to do so, managed it thus. Knowing that he was about to act contrary to their customs, he sent for the royal judges, and asked them if there were any law permitting any one who wished to cohabit with his sister. Now the royal judges are select men among the Persians, who retain their office during life, or till convicted of some injustice; and it is they who preside in the Persian courts and interpret the laws and institutions of the nation, and all things are referred to them. So to this question of Cambyses they returned an answer that was both just and safe, saying that they could find no law permitting a brother to marry his sister; but they had indeed dis-

covered another—that it was lawful for the king of the Persians to do whatever he liked. Thus, then, they did not break the law from fear of Cambyses; and yet, lest they should themselves perish out of regard for the law, they found another law to help him in marrying his sister.”* Cambyses and his judges seem to have been well suited. There is on record a better instance of courtly evasion, related by Waller. The poet went, on the day of a dissolution of parliament, to see the King, James II., at dinner. “Dr. Andrews, Bishop of Winchester, and Dr. Neal, Bishop of Durham, were standing behind his majesty’s chair, and there happened something in the conversation these prelates had with the King on which Mr. Waller did often reflect. His majesty asked the bishops, ‘My lords, cannot I take my subjects’ money when I want it, without all this formality in parliament?’ The Bishop of Durham readily answered, ‘God forbid, sire, but you should! You are the breath of our nostrils.’ Whereupon the King turned and said to the Bishop of Winchester, ‘Well, my lord, what say you?’ ‘Sire,’ replied the bishop, ‘I have no skill to judge of parliamentary cases.’ The King replied, ‘No put-offs, my lord—answer me presently.’ ‘Then, sire,’ said he, ‘I think it is lawful for you to take my brother Neal’s money, for he offers it.’”†

It was another sister who followed Cambyses into Egypt, and perished there by his violence. She was present when he set a lion’s whelp to fight a puppy. The latter had the worst, till another of the same litter broke loose, and came to help it, when the two together beat the lion. The princess shed tears at the sight, and being questioned why she did so, replied that it was for the remembrance of Smerdis, and the thought that there was no one to avenge his death. The brute kicked her, and thereby inflicted a mortal injury.

He held Prexaspes, the person employed to murder Smerdis, in especial favour, and among other marks of it

* iii. 31.

, † Preface to Waller’s Poems, Lond. 1711.

appointed that nobleman's son to be his cup-bearer. One day he asked, "Prexaspes, what sort of person do the Persians think me?" He replied with unseasonable candour, "that they praised him very highly, only they said that he was terribly fond of wine." Cambyzes was very angry at the imputation. "Do the Persians," he answered, "say that I am beside myself for love of wine? You shall see whether they speak the truth, or whether it is they that are beside themselves when they talk thus. If I cleave your son's heart with my arrow as he stands without the door, then the Persians will be proved to talk nonsense: if I miss, then say that the Persians speak truth, and it is I that am mad." He drew his bow, the boy fell, and he commanded that he should be opened: the arrow was found fixed in his heart. He turned to the father and said, laughing, "Prexaspes, I have made it clear to you that the Persians are mad, and not I. Now tell me whether you have seen any man who shot so well?" The miserable wretch, fearing for his own safety, replied that not even a god could have done so well.

Croesus, who was kept in attendance in his court, as before in Cyrus's, ventured to remonstrate on the course which he was pursuing, but so unsuccessfully, that nothing but a rapid flight saved him from furnishing another proof of Cambyzes' skill in archery. He was then ordered to execution, but the officers who had charge of him, knowing the value that their master set upon Croesus, and expecting rewards for saving his life, concealed him until the king's anger should be over. One day at length they produced him, when Cambyzes was expressing his regret for the Lydian's death. It is dangerous to calculate upon a madman's conduct. The king said that he was very glad Croesus was preserved, and put the officers to death for disobeying his orders.

He had now been absent from Persia three years nearly, when a revolt broke out; the natural consequence of so long a desertion of the seat of empire, especially under a despotic government; in which case the people, habituated implicitly to submit to those in

authority, care little from what head that authority emanates, provided it is conveyed through the customary channels. On leaving Persia, Cambyses had appointed Patizeithes, a Magian, or one of the hereditary priesthood, to be steward or inspector of the royal household. This man probably possessed rank and influence, as, under all monarchies, the nobility have been eager to fill even menial offices about the royal person; perhaps his station gave him political importance, as in France, under the Merovingian dynasty, the Maires du Palais wielded the whole power of the state. He had a brother named Smerdis, closely resembling in person Smerdis the son of Cyrus; and knowing both that the latter was dead, and that the fact of his death was carefully concealed from the nation, he conceived a plan, founded probably on the reputed madness and necessary unpopularity of Cambyses, for dethroning him, and substituting his own brother as the son of Cyrus. The attempt seems to have succeeded without opposition: for the historian merely states that he set his brother on the throne, and sent heralds throughout the empire, to say that in future obedience was to be paid to Smerdis, son of Cyrus, and not to Cambyses. The herald sent into Egypt found the latter with his army in Syria, and (a service of no small danger) boldly delivered his message to the king in public. On this occasion the madman behaved reasonably, for instead of killing Prexaspes and the herald in the first instance, and then proceeding to inquire how Smerdis came to be alive, he began by investigating, and soon perceived the real state of the case. The true meaning of the dream already referred to then struck him, in which he saw a messenger from Susa, who told him that Smerdis sat upon the throne, and reached the heavens with his head. Some remnant of kindly feeling and remorse now touched his heart, and he wept to think that he had destroyed his brother to no purpose; but this soon gave way to a natural anger, and with his usual precipitation he would instantly have departed to assert his own empire, and punish the conspirators. But as he sprung to horse the button dropped

off which closed the end of his scabbard ; and the naked point pierced his thigh, the spot in which he had sacrilegiously wounded Apis. He thought that the injury was mortal, and asked the name of the city where he then was. It was called Ecbatana,* and in Ecbatana an oracle had forewarned him he should die ; but he naturally interpreted it of the more celebrated Ecbatana, the residence of the ancient Median kings. When he heard the name he was sobered, and comprehending the oracle aright, said “ Here then Cambyses, son of Cyrus, is destined to end his life.”† The wound mortified, and on the twentieth day after the accident he sent for the most eminent of his countrymen, and addressed them in these words : “ Men of Persia, I am now forced to de-

* A Syrian city ; its site is not clearly ascertained. Cambyses seems to have been at this time on his route home.

† *K. Henry.* Doth any name particular belong
Unto the lodging where I first did swoon ?

Warw. 'Tis called Jerusalem, my noble lord.

K. Henry. Laud be to God !—even there my life must
end.

It hath been prophesied to me many years
I should not die, but in Jerusalem,

Which vainly I supposed the Holy Land :—

But bear me to that chamber ; there I'll lie.

In that Jerusalem shall Harry die.

King Henry IV. Part 2, iv. 4.

The ground work of this passage is to be found in Holinshed ; and the same tale is told in Fabyan's Chronicles, and in Restell's Pastime of Pleasure. The latter writers state it without any appearance of doubt. But Holinshed uses a degree of caution not very common in a chronicler of that time : “ Whether this was true that so he spake, as one that gave too much credit to foolish prophecies and vain tales, or whether it was fained, as in such cases it commonly happeneth, we leave it to the advised reader to judge.” The advised reader will probably hesitate little in adopting the latter conclusion ; especially as the same tale is told of other persons. See the notes to Shakspeare, in the edition of 1821. The actors and the scenes differ in the different cases ; but the equivoque arises in all upon the name “ Jerusalem.”

clare to you what I have hitherto concealed most carefully. For, being in Egypt, I saw in my sleep a vision which I would fain never have seen, and thought a messenger from home brought word that Smerdis sat upon the throne, and reached the heavens with his head. Fearing, therefore, to be deposed by my brother, I did more hastily than wisely, for it is not in man's nature to turn aside that which is decreed : but I, fool as I was, sent Prexaspes to Susa to kill Smerdis, and lived in security when this great evil was done, never thinking that, though he was removed, some other person might rise up against me. And thus, being wrong concerning every thing that was to happen, I have needlessly become a fratricide, and yet am equally deprived of my kingdom. For it was Smerdis, the Magian, whose revolt the divinity foretold in my dream. The deed then is done, and be assured that you have no longer Smerdis, son of Cyrus, but the Magi fill the royal office ; he whom I left steward of my household, and Smerdis his brother. He is dead, then, whose part especially it was to avenge the wrongs done to me by the Magi ; dead, impiously murdered by his nearest of kin. And as he is no more, I am compelled to give in charge to you, O Persians, those things which at the end of life I wish to be done. I require of you then, and call the gods of our empire to witness, that you suffer not the sovereignty to revert to the Medes, but if they have obtained it by fraud, by fraud let them be stripped of it ; if by force, by force do you recover it. And as you do this, may your land be fruitful, and your wives and flocks yield increase to you as a free people for ever ; but if you recover not the empire, nor attempt to recover it, I imprecate upon you the reverse of all these things, and further pray that the end of every Persian may be like mine." So saying, he bewailed in tears his whole condition. And when the Persians beheld their king weeping they rent their clothes, and made lamentation unsparingly.* Thus

* Herod, iii. 65.

died Cambyses, in the seventh year and fifth month of his reign.

The Egyptians, who were horror-struck at the outrage committed upon Apis, and who ascribed the atrocities perpetrated by the Persian monarch to madness, the consequence of this crime, saw in the manner of his death a further manifestation of divine vengeance. Strange inconsistency, that men should believe a deity unable to protect his own person, and yet thus capable of inflicting punishment upon his injurer! In a similar spirit, the death of Cleomenes, King of Sparta, an event attended with remarkable and impressive circumstances, was attributed to no less than four different acts of impiety by different parties, each believing that it was caused by an infringement upon those things which they themselves considered as peculiarly sacred. Cleomenes' mind was impaired before he ascended the throne, insomuch that his younger brother endeavoured to set aside the strict order of succession in his own favour. We may notice this as a strong proof of what has been said of the efficacy of moral restraint in preserving mental sanity, and checking the progress of existing disease. The strict discipline of Sparta, the subjection of her kings in common with all other citizens, not merely to written law, but to public opinion, was sufficient to restrain the wanderings even of an impaired mind; for though his reign was overbearing and violent, nothing is related of him which can be considered as a proof of madness until towards its close, when he became addicted to drunkenness, a vice especially contrary to the Spartan laws. Being proved to have bribed the priestess to return an answer suitable to his own interests on one occasion when the Spartan government consulted the Delphic oracle, he fled to Thessaly, and from thence to Arcadia, where he employed himself so successfully in stirring up war against Sparta, that he was recalled and reinstated. Shortly after he broke out into frenzy, having been before, says Herodotus, somewhat crazed; and being placed in confinement under the charge of a

Helot, he obtained a sword from his guard, with which he deliberately cut himself into pieces, beginning at the legs and so proceeding upwards, until he reached the vital parts, and died.*

That so tragical an end should excite general attention, that it should be referred to the direct interposition of the Deity to punish some crime, is no wonder: what is chiefly observable, and characteristic of Grecian religion, is that no one thought of attributing the anger of the gods to moral guilt, of which Cleomenes had no lack, but merely to some injury or insult offered especially to the gods themselves. Hence, according to the religious prepossessions of the party speculating, there were four methods current of accounting for his madness. Some time before, when commanding in an invasion of Argolis, he had defeated the opposing army, and driven many of them into a wood sacred to the hero Argus (not he with the many eyes), from whom the Argians traced their descent. Unwilling to lose his prey, he at first enticed them one by one with promises of safety, and when his treachery was discovered, and they refused to quit their asylum, he caused the Helots attendant on the army to surround the grove with dry wood, and burnt it together with the wretches it contained. The Argians then said that the hero Argus thus avenged the pollution and destruction of his grove: the Athenians were equally confident that he was thus afflicted because he had once ravaged the sacred precincts of Eleusis: the other Greeks, who cared comparatively little either for Argus or Ceres, found a sufficient cause in his corruption of the Delphian oracle, which was consulted and venerated

* Loss of sensation or a depraved state of sensation in the extremities, is a common symptom of madness. Where the former exists, it is not uncommon for patients to burn themselves dreadfully, from mere insensibility to the action of fire. The latter is often manifested by a sort of irritation which leads the sufferer to cut and lacerate the hands and feet. These facts, with a little allowance for exaggeration, may do something to explain rather a startling passage.—See Dr. Conolly on Insanity.

by all alike. And the Spartans, bigoted to nothing so much as to their own institutions, probably stumbled upon the truth when they said that there was nothing divine about the business, but that he was driven mad by hard drinking. A similar feeling led the royalists to see something extraordinary in the death of Lord Brooke, who was killed by a musket-shot in the eye, fired from Lichfield Cathedral, while besieging it for the Parliament in 1643. "There were many discourses and observations upon his death, that it should be upon St. Chad's day, being the 2nd of March, by whose name, he being a bishop shortly after the planting of Christianity in this island, that church had anciently been called. And it was reported that in his prayer that very morning (for he used to pray publicly, though his chaplain were in the presence), he wished 'that if the cause he were in were not right and just, he might presently be cut off.'" Others went still further, and observed not only that he was killed in attacking St. Chad's church on St. Chad's day, but that he received his death-wound in the very eye with which he had said he hoped to see the ruin of all the cathedrals in the kingdom. It is observable that the honour of the tutelary saint seems to have been more thought of than that of the Deity.

C. Cæsar Caligula, son of Germanicus and Agrippina, being left an orphan at an early age, passed under the guardianship of his grand-uncle Tiberius, who adopted and declared him his successor. In this critical situation he profited so well by the admirable example of duplicity ever before him, that neither the destruction of his nearest relations, nor even the insults studiously offered to himself, drew from him a complaint, or interrupted his obsequious attentions to the reigning power. It was well said after his accession, in reference to this period, that there never was a better slave or a worse master. But cruelty and licentiousness showed themselves through this mask of milkiness; and the clear-sighted Tiberius, it is said, often predicted that Caligula would live for his own and all men's perdition, and that he was cherishing a serpent against the Roman people, and a Phaeton against

the whole world. If the speech be genuine, the emperor's kind intentions towards others merited that he should be the first victim of his amiable pupil, and such was the case. At the close of his last illness, while he lay in a stupor which was supposed to be death, Macro, the favourite minister, proclaimed Caligula. But he revived—his courtiers slunk away from the new-made monarch, and Caligula in passive terror awaited the consequences of his precipitance, until Macro caused his reviving benefactor to be smothered under the bed-clothes.

The news of a change of masters was received with universal joy, partly from hatred to Tiberius, partly from love to the family of Germanicus; and the early conduct of the young prince was calculated to increase the general attachment. He honoured the ashes of his mother and brothers with a splendid funeral, remitted punishments, discharged all criminal proceedings, professed to have no ears for informers, watched over public morals and the administration of justice, and in all things assumed the semblance of a mild and conscientious monarch. But this affectation of popularity lasted no longer than the caprice or fear which produced it.

The extravagant folly of his nature broke out in the assumption of divinity. This was no new pretension; but he surpassed his predecessors in the extent and absurdity of his claims. He mutilated without remorse the products of Grecian art, by placing his own head upon the images of the gods, without regard either to the beauty or sanctity of the statues which he thus disfigured. He built a temple in his own honour, appointed priests, and laid down a ritual of sacrifice, including only those birds which were most esteemed by the epicures of the day. He assumed the title of Latian Jupiter, and completed the mummery by pretending to hold secret conferences with the Jupiter of the Capitol, in which he was heard threatening to send him back to Greece in disgrace; and was only mollified by the repeated entreaties of the father of gods and men, who invited him to share his own abode, the venerated Capitol.

The Jews of course did not acknowledge his divinity,

which angered him exceedingly, insomuch that he issued an order to erect his own statue in the temple at Jerusalem. At the intercession of Agrippa this edict was recalled, but his anger against the nation still continued, and gave rise to a very curious scene. A deputation of Jews had gone to Rome in order to conduct a dispute between themselves and the Alexandrians. Caligula appointed the parties to come before him at a villa which he had ordered to be thrown open for his inspection. On the introduction of the Jews, "You," he said, "are those fellows who think me no god, though I am acknowledged to be such by all men, and who confess none except that unpronounceable one of yours;" and raising his hands towards heaven, he uttered that word which it was not lawful to hear, far less to speak. The Jews were in despair, while their adversaries jumped and clapped their hands, and accumulated the epithets of all the gods on Caligula. One of them, to improve this advantage, said that the emperor would detest the Jews still more if he knew that they were the only people who had never sacrificed in his behalf. The Jews all exclaimed that it was false—that they had thrice offered hecatombs for his welfare. "Be it so," he answered; "what then? You sacrificed to another, and not to me." All this time he was running over the whole house, up and down stairs, and dragging the poor Jews after, who, besides being in mortal terror, were exposed to the ridicule of all the court. Presently he gave some orders about the building, and then turned to them and said gravely, "But why do you not eat pork?" This was another triumph for their adversaries, who burst into such immoderate laughter that the courtiers began to be shocked. The Jews answered, "that the habits of nations varied. Some persons," they added, "do not eat lamb." "They are right," said the emperor, "it is a tasteless meat." At last he said, rather angrily, "I should like to know on what plea you can justify your city;" and as they entered into a long speech, he ran over the house to give orders about the windows; then returning, he asked again what they had to say, and then, when they began their speech again, ran off to look

at some pictures. Finally he sent them off, with the observation, "These are not such bad fellows after all, but they are great fools for not believing me to be a god."*

No man ever spilt blood more lightly, with more refinement in cruelty, or with less excuse. He had no rivals to fear, no conspiracies to provoke him; but selfishness seemed to have stifled every humane feeling, and to have left him a prey to the guidance of his evil passions, unrestrained by that natural abhorrence of blood which few even of the worst entirely overcome. To relate one half of his atrocities would weary and disgust the reader: the few here given are selected to show how closely levity was mingled with brutality. He asked one who had been banished by Tiberius, how he employed himself in exile. "I besought the gods that Tiberius might perish, and you be emperor," was the courtly reply. Thinking that those whom he had banished might be similarly employed, he sent persons around the islands of the Mediterranean, the abodes usually prescribed to those unhappy men, commissioned to put all to death. Cowardly as cruel, he was conscious that the prayer merited a hearing, and had superstition to fear, though not religion to venerate or obey. A civil officer of rank, resident for the sake of his health in Anticyra (an island of the Ægean Sea, celebrated for the growth of hellebore), requested the extension of his leave of absence. Caligula answered, "that blood-letting was necessary, where so long a course of hellebore had failed," and sent at the same time an order for his execution. The joke, such as it is, appears to have been the only provocation to this act. Imperial wit need be brilliant if it is to be displayed at so high a price. It was his frequent order to the executioner, whose work he loved to superintend, "Strike so that he may feel himself die." When, by a mistake of name, one man had suffered for another, he observed that both deserved alike; and here he probably stumbled

* Philo Περὶ Ἀρετῶν. sub fin.

upon a truth. One of his exclamations is notorious : " Oh that the Roman people had one neck ! " In a similar spirit he lamented that his reign was distinguished by no public misfortunes—he should be forgotten in the prosperity of the age. It was a mistaken diffidence : he might have trusted in his own powers to avert such a misfortune. Another source of bloodshed was his profuse expenditure. Within a year he spent the treasure left by Tiberius, amounting to twenty-two millions sterling, and then supplied his extravagance by every species of extortion. He abrogated the wills of some, because of their ingratitude in not making his predecessor, or himself, their heir ; those of others he annulled, because witnesses were found to say that they had meant to do so ; and having thus frightened many into appointing him a legatee conjointly with their friends and relations, he said that they were laughing at him, to continue alive after making their wills, and sent poisoned dishes to many of them. And being thus callous, and boastfully indifferent to his subjects' sufferings, he chose to affect horror when in the savage sports of the amphitheatre one gladiator killed five others, and published an edict to express his abhorrence at the cruelty of those who had endured such a sight.

One instance of his extortion we could pardon. After an exhibition of gladiators, he caused the survivors to be sold by auction. While so employed he observed that one Aponius was dozing in his seat, and turning to the auctioneer, desired him on no account to neglect the biddings of the gentleman who was nodding to him from the benches. Finally thirteen gladiators were knocked down to the unconscious bidder for near 73,000*l*. Among other equally honest and dignified ways of raising money, he sold in Gaul the jewels, servants, and other property, even the very children of his sisters ; and he found this so profitable, that he sent to Rome for the old furniture of the palace, pressing all carriages, public and private, for its conveyance, to the great inconvenience and even distress of the capital. But the sale, we may suppose, went off dully, for the emperor complained loudly of his

subjects' avarice, who were not ashamed to be richer than himself, and affected sorrow at being compelled to alienate the imperial property.

The most ludicrous part of his life is the history of his wars. Being told that his Batavian guards wanted recruiting, he took a sudden whim to make a German campaign, and set out with such speed that he arrived at his head-quarters in Gaul before the troops could be entirely collected. He now assumed the character of a strict disciplinarian ; broke those officers whom his own causeless hurry had made too late ; and mingling a due attention to economy with his caprices, deprived 6000 veterans of the pensions due to them. He claimed the conquest of Britain, on the ground of receiving homage from an exiled prince of that island ; and having sent a pompous account of this magnificent acquisition to the senate, he proceeded to the Rhine and even crossed it. While marching through a defile, he heard some one observe that the appearance of an enemy at that moment would cause no little confusion. The notion of war in earnest was too much for the descendant of Germanicus and Drusus. He mounted his horse, hurried to recross the river, and rather than wait until an obstructed bridge could be cleared, was passed from hand to hand over the heads of the crowd. Not finding, or rather not seeking a real enemy, he made some Germans of his own army conceal themselves in the forest, and while he was at table caused the approach of an enemy to be hurriedly announced. On this he rushed to horse, galloped with his companions and part of his guard into the next wood, erected a trophy in honour of his exploit, and quickly returned to censure the cowardice of those who had refused to share the danger of their prince. In a similar spirit he sent away some hostages privately, then led the hue and cry to overtake them, and brought them back in fetters as deserters. But his most brilliant exploit was that of giving battle to the ocean. He drew his troops up in line upon the sea-shore, ranged his artillery, machines for throwing large darts and stones, as if against an enemy, and then, while all were wondering

what folly would come next, commanded the soldiers to fill their helmets and pockets with shells, calling them the spoils of the ocean, due to the Capitol and the palace. To celebrate this victory he built a lighthouse, and distributed a hundred denarii to every soldier; and then, as if he had surpassed all former instances of liberality, "Depart," he said, "depart happy and rich."

Such victories deserved a triumph, but there was some difficulty in procuring proper ornaments for the ostentatious ceremony: for his German victories had produced no prisoners, and it does not appear to have occurred to him that the ocean contained fish as well as shells. A live porpoise would have formed a novel and appropriate feature in the procession, and have done honour to his own prowess and to the majesty of the empire. To supply the deficiency he collected a number of Gauls, distinguished by their stature and personal advantages, caused them to let their hair grow, and to dye it red (the characteristics of the German race), and even to learn the German language, and to assume German names. Strange mixture of vanity with disregard of his own character and contempt of the public opinion! The slightest reflection must have shown the futility of these pretences, and the immeasurable littleness of his own behaviour. But so long as he had the pleasure of wearing his borrowed plumes, it seems to have mattered not that the world knew them to be borrowed. In a similar spirit he affected to wear the breast-plate of Alexander the Great. What bitterer satire could his worst enemy have devised?

The capricious variations of his temper exposed his associates to constant danger. At one time he loved company, at another solitude: sometimes the number of petitions made him angry, and sometimes the want of them. He undertook things in the greatest hurry, and executed them with sluggish neglect. To flatter, or to speak truth, was equally dangerous, for sometimes he was in a humour for one and sometimes for the other; so that those who had intercourse with him were equally

at a loss what to do or say, and thanked fortune rather than prudence if they came off unhurt.

His private life was polluted by vice and intemperance of every description. Cowardly as cruel, the report of a rebellion among those Germans of whose conquest he boasted, terrified him into preparing a refuge in his transmarine dominions, lest, like the Cimbri of old, they should force a passage into Italy. At a clap of thunder he would close his eyes and cover his head, and in a heavy storm the Latian Jupiter used to run under the bed, to hide himself from his Capitoline brother. He usually slept but three hours in the night, and that not calmly, but agitated by strange visions: the rest he passed sitting upon the bed, or traversing extensive colonnades, impatiently calling for the return of day. Justice began the work of retribution early, and he who troubled the rest of all others was unable to find quiet for himself. Among his other extraordinary qualities was a most insane jealousy of the slightest advantages enjoyed by others. He overthrew the statues of eminent men erected by Augustus in the field of Mars, and forbade them to be erected to any one in future except with his express permission. He even thought of not allowing Homer to be read: "Why not I, as well as Plato, who expelled that poet from his republic?" and talked of weeding all libraries of the writings and images of Virgil and Livy. This folly he carried even to envying the personal qualifications of his subjects, and being bald himself, he sent the barber abroad to shave every good head of hair that came in his way.

Little remains to complete the picture, but to say that his tastes were low, as his character was brutish. Passionately fond of theatrical entertainments and the sports of the amphitheatre and circus, it was from the profligate followers of these arts that he chose his favourites, to whom, and to whom alone, he was devotedly attached. The story of his meaning to appoint his horse consul is well known: the brute would have done more credit to the subordinate, than his master to the imperial

dignity; but it is apocryphal. But besides a marble stable and an ivory manger, indulgences to which so dignified an animal might reasonably aspire, Caligula assigned to him a house and establishment, that he might entertain company more splendidly. We regret not to know whether the senators or their horses were the objects of this hospitality.

He was wont to say, that of all his qualities, he most valued his firmness of purpose (*ᾠδιάρρηψία*). The judgment was in one sense correct: this was indeed the predominant feature of his character. But it was the firmness not of principle, not even of policy,¹ but of obstinate and entire selfishness, which regarded not the weightiest interests of others when placed in opposition to its caprices; of habitual self-indulgence, which gratified the whim of the moment, alike careless of its folly or of its guilt. At first he would not, in the end he probably could not, control his passions; and this inflexibility is the symptom of that mental disease which we believe to originate in uncontrolled power. This plea furnishes no particle of excuse for him, no more than drunkenness for the excesses of the drunkard: in both the loss of reason is a crime in itself, and in neither probably is it ever so complete as to obliterate the perception of right and wrong. Of genuine madness we find no trace in his life. He appears to have been subject to no delusions upon particular subjects, to no access either of frenzy or melancholy. As a boy he, as well as Cambyzes, was subject to epileptic fits, which were supposed to have impaired his mind; and he entertained, it is said, doubts of his own sanity, and had thoughts of submitting to a course of medicine for his recovery. Others thought that a love potion, administered by his wife to fix affection, had produced madness; but the tenor of his life countenances neither supposition. Folly, selfishness, cruelty, and the restlessness of a self-upbraiding spirit cannot be allowed shelter under the plea of insanity; and the mental weakness and incapacity of self-control which arises from the habitual

dominion of passion, is no less widely different in its effects than in its origin from that which is dependent upon physical causes.

He perished by domestic conspiracy, in the fourth year of his reign and the twenty-ninth of his age. He oppressed the people and the nobility with impunity: he fell, when his jealous temper rendered him formidable to his servants and favourites.

Paul, emperor of Russia, was the son of Catherine II., who, as is well known, murdered her husband Peter III., and took possession of his throne, which she retained till death. She conceived a strong aversion for her son, who was in consequence brought up in retirement, neglected, and even exposed to want. When arrived at manhood he was still forbidden to reside at court; his children were taken away to be educated under the empress's care; he was studiously excluded from all knowledge or participation in affairs of state; and even denied permission to gratify his military taste by active service. His mother's object was at once to render him unfit for empire, and to spread abroad the notion that he was so; with the view of passing him entirely over in favour of his son Alexander, whom in her will she appointed to succeed to the throne. Paul seems to have been naturally affectionate, methodical, a lover of justice, temperate, even amidst the most consummate profligacy ever witnessed in a court; but these good qualities were stifled by the faults of his education. Privation, contumely, and a constant sense of injury, soured his temper, and rendered him distrustful and cruel, at the same time that the enjoyment of a minor despotism made him capricious and ungovernable; for he was the undisputed master of his little court, and could vent upon others the ill-humour inspired by his own crosses, unchecked by the presence of a superior, or the influence of public observation. He lived at the country palaces of Gatchina and Paulowsky, surrounded by his household officers and troops, and shunned by all others; devoted to the minutiae of military discipline, and employed chiefly in reviewing his guards, for whom he devised a

new system of dress and regulations, which it was afterwards his great pride and pleasure to introduce into the army at large. There was a long terrace at Paulowsky, from which he could see all his sentinels, who were stuck about wherever there was room for a sentry-box. Here he used to promenade with an eye-glass, sending orders from time to time to one man to open a button more or less, to another to carry his musket higher or lower, and sometimes trotting a quarter of a league to administer a good caning with his own royal hand to one soldier, or to bestow a rouble on another, as he was pleased or displeased with his bearing.

One or two anecdotes of this part of his life will best illustrate his temper. Travelling through a forest, with marsh on each side of the road, he recollected some reason for going back, and ordered the driver to turn. He did not do so instantly, and Paul repeated the order. "In a moment," the man replied; "here the road is too narrow." Paul flew into a passion, jumped out of the carriage, and called to an equerry to stop the driver and chastise him. The equerry endeavoured to allay the storm by assurances that the carriage would turn as soon as possible. "You are a scoundrel as well as he," was the reply; "he shall turn even though he break my neck: at all hazards he shall do as I bid, the moment I give the order." Meanwhile the coachman had done so, but too late to save himself from a sound beating.

He ordered a horse that stumbled under him to be starved. On the eighth day word was brought him of the animal's death; to which he merely answered, "Good." The same accident happened after his accession in the streets of St. Petersburg, on which he got off, made his equerries hold a court-martial, and sentenced the offending beast to receive a hundred blows with a stick, which were immediately inflicted in presence of the Czar and the people. Worse anecdotes might be found. His passion for the strict observance of military minutiae has been mentioned. One day, as he exercised his regiment of cuirassiers, an officer's horse fell. Paul ran to the spot in a fury: "Get up, you rascal!" "I

cannot, Sire—my leg is broken.” Paul spit upon him, and walked away swearing.

Catherine, as before said, appointed Alexander her successor by will. She had intrusted this important document to Zoubow, her last favourite, who hastened immediately upon her death, in the year 1796, to place it in Paul’s hands. It is due to the late emperor to say, that he never took any part in the measures adopted for excluding his father, who succeeded to the vacant throne without opposition. The Czar’s conduct towards his family, on this occasion, does him honour: the more, that under similar circumstances, few of his predecessors would have hesitated to establish their power by the imprisonment or death even of an involuntary rival. Instead of using severity, he gave an affectionate reception to his sons, who had been separated from him since childhood, increased their revenues, and assured them and the empress, to whom he had been a harsh and capricious husband, of his love and protection; and at the same time, with prudence commendable on his son’s account no less than on his own, he provided employment for Alexander which kept the prince near his person till the critical time was over.

The court and city of St. Petersburg, the whole public of Russia, received with fear their new sovereign, whose caprice and extravagance were well known; but his first measures belied their expectation. He showed a decent respect to his mother’s memory, though he fully returned the hatred which she felt for him, retained her ministers, whom he had no reason to love, and displayed judgment and honesty in his first political measures, until every body thought that a false estimate had been formed of his character. This good sense and moderation did not last long. His first step was to secure his throne by incorporating with the royal guards his own household troops, on whose fidelity he depended. The latter, like the Prætorian bands of the Roman emperors, were a highly privileged and powerful body, captains of which held the rank of colonels of the line. Its officers of course were chiefly of high rank, and many of them, to the amount of some hundred, resigned their commis-

sions, angry at seeing men not of noble birth, perhaps raised from the ranks, placed over their heads, or unwilling to undergo the new and harassing discipline which Paul introduced. The Czar became alarmed at this general desertion, and, by way of conciliation, issued an order that all who had resigned, or should thereafter resign their commissions, should quit St. Petersburg within twenty-four hours. Many persons transported suddenly without the barriers, and forbidden to re-enter the city, and left on the high road, without shelter or clothing fitted to protect them from the cold, perished miserably for want of money to reach their homes.

Paul came to the throne ambitious of signaling himself as a reformer, but his mind was far too confined to perform so hard a task successfully. In the civil department, he did little but reverse all that his mother had done; in the military, his attention was confined to insignificant details. His great object was to conform the dress and exercise of the whole army to the model which he had been so long and anxiously forming at Gatschina. The very morning after his accession he commenced this important task by establishing what he called his Wacht-parade, to which every morning he devoted three or four hours. However severe the cold, he was still there, dressed in a plain green uniform, with thick boots and a large hat, for he placed his pride in bearing a Russian winter without furs; stamping about to warm himself, with his bald head bare and his snub-nose turned up to the wind, one hand behind his back, and the other beating time with his cane, and crying *Raz, dva—Raz, dva*, one, two—one two—surrounded by gouty old generals, who dared neither to absent themselves nor to dress warmer than their master. The old Russian uniform was handsome, suited to the climate, and could be put on in an instant: it consisted merely of a jacket and large trousers, which enabled the wearer to protect himself by any quantity of interior clothing, without injury to uniformity of appearance. The hair was worn long, and falling round the neck, so that it defended the ears from cold. Paul introduced the old-fashioned German

uniform, which every true Russian hated for its own sake, and despised as holding the Germans in supreme contempt ; he encased their legs in long tight gaiters, made them powder and curl their hair, and hung false pigtailes from their necks. Marshal Suvarof, on receiving orders to introduce these changes, together with the measure of the men's curls and pigtailes (for everything under Paul was done by measure), observed that " hair-powder was not gunpowder, nor curls cannon, nor pigtailes bayonets ;" and this witticism is said to have cost him his recall.

Not content with modelling the army after his own notions of elegance, his meddling spirit exerted itself in the most vexatious and tyrannical interferences with the freedom of private life. The dress, the colour of carriages and liveries, the method of harnessing horses, everything was matter of rule, and woe to him who met the Czar with anything about his equipage contrary to etiquette. One day he saw Count Razumoffski's sledge standing in the street without the driver, and ordered it to be immediately broken in pieces. It was of a blue colour, and the servants wore red liveries : upon which he issued a proclamation forbidding the use of blue sledges and red liveries in any part of the empire. He waged a crusade against round hats, which he thought a mark of jacobinism, the object of his greatest hate and fear. If any person appeared in one, it was taken from his head by the police ; if he resisted, he was well beaten. The cocked hats in St. Petersburg were of course soon exhausted, and then round hats were metamorphosed into three-cornered hats, by pinning up the sides. The emperor himself is said to have stopped persons and pinned up their hats with his royal hands, to show his people how a loyal subject ought to be dressed. An order against wearing boots with coloured tops was no less rigorously enforced. The police officers stopped a gentleman driving through the streets in a pair. He remonstrated, and said he had no others with him, and certainly would not cut off the tops of those ; upon which the officers, seizing each a leg as he sat in his droski, pulled them off, and left him to go

barefoot home. Coming down a street, the emperor saw a nobleman who had stopped to look at some workmen planting trees by his order. "What are you doing?" said he. "Merely seeing the men work," replied the nobleman. "Oh! is that your employment? Take off his pelisse and give him a spade. There—now work yourself!" Once, when he met an officer going to the palace wrapped in his cloak, a servant following with his sword, he gave the servant his master's commission, and reduced the officer to the ranks.

It was an ancient Russian usage that all who met the Czar, male or female, should quit their carriage, be it in mud or snow, to salute, and even to prostrate themselves before him. Peter the Great used to cudgel soundly any person who did so, and Catherine II. had abolished the practice; but Paul revived it, and exacted its observance most severely. Of course, amid a crowd of carriages continually passing at full speed, it was easy to neglect it, without intentional disrespect; but no such excuse was admitted. A lady, wife of a general in the army, hastening into St. Petersburg, from the country, to procure medical advice for her sick husband, passed the Czar inadvertently, and was immediately arrested and sent to prison. Alarm and anxiety threw her into a burning fever, which terminated in madness; and her husband died from the same causes, and for want of proper care and attendance. On being presented to Paul, it was necessary to drop plump on your knees, with force enough to make the floor ring as if a musket had been grounded, and to kiss his hand with energy sufficient to certify to all present the honour which you had just enjoyed. Prince George Galitzin was placed under arrest for kissing his hand *too negligently*. When enraged he lost all command of himself, which sometimes gave rise to very curious scenes. In one of his furious passions, flourishing his cane, he struck by accident the branch of a large lustre and broke it; whereupon he commenced a serious attack, from which he did not relax until he had entirely demolished his brittle antagonist.

Under a sovereign of such a temper no man could feel secure for an hour. The police kept strict watch over

the words, the actions, the correspondence of every one; and the knout, exile to Siberia, or at the best deportation without the frontiers, were unsparingly dealt out for involuntary or chimerical offences: and suspected persons were continually hurried out of the country without time being allowed for the arrangement of their affairs, and in ignorance at once of their offence and of the nature of the intended punishment. Such a state of things was not likely to last very long in Russia, with so many examples to prove how easy the descent is from the palace to the grave.

Towards the close of his reign his conduct became more and more intolerable, and at last he took care to advertise all Europe of his folly or madness, or both, by inserting in the St. Petersburg Gazette a notice to the following effect: "That the Emperor of Russia, finding that the powers of Europe cannot agree among themselves, and being desirous to put an end to a war which has desolated it for eleven years, intends to point out a spot to which he will invite all the other sovereigns to repair and fight in single combat, bringing with them as seconds and esquires their most enlightened ministers and able generals, such as Turgot, Pitt, Bernstorff, and that the Emperor himself proposes being attended by Generals Count Pahlen and Kutusoff." This piece of extravagance appears to have completed the disgust of the nobility, and consummated his ruin.

A plot was formed, at the head of which was Count Zoubow, the man to whom he had been indebted for the important service of suppressing Catherine's will. Paul's aversion to every thing which his mother had favoured soon overcame his gratitude, and Zoubow was ordered to quit the court, and reside upon his estates. Fresh intrigues again brought him into favour, and the first use he made of it was to plan the murder of his master. He opened his mind gradually to other noblemen: it was resolved, as private crime will often assume the guise of public virtue, that the safety of the empire required the deposition of Paul; and as there is but one prison whose doors can never open to a dethroned mo-

narch, they resolved, in conformity with all Russian precedent, to put him to death. The details of this catastrophe are interesting, and, it is presumed, authentic and accurate, since they were thus related to Mr. Carr by an eye-witness, and therefore an agent in the deed.

“The Emperor used to sleep in an outer apartment, next the Empress’s, upon a sofa, in his boots and regimentals; the other branches of the imperial family being lodged in different parts of the same building. On the 10th March, o.s. 1801, the day preceding the fatal night (whether Paul’s apprehension, or anonymous information suggested the idea, is not known), conceiving that a storm was ready to burst upon him, he sent to Count P——, the governor of the city, one of the noblemen who had resolved on his destruction. ‘I am informed, P——,’ said the Emperor, ‘that there is a conspiracy on foot against me: do you think it necessary to take any precaution?’ The Count, without betraying the least emotion, replied, ‘Sire, do not suffer such apprehensions to haunt your mind; if there were any combination forming against your Majesty’s person, I am sure I should be acquainted with it.’ ‘Then I am satisfied,’ said the Emperor, and the governor withdrew. Before Paul retired to rest, he unexpectedly expressed the most tender solicitude for the Empress and his children, kissed them with all the warmth of farewell fondness, and remained with them longer than usual; and after he had visited the sentinels at their different posts, he retired to his chamber, where he had not long remained, before, under some colourable pretext that satisfied the men, the guard was changed by the officers who had the command for the night, and were engaged in the confederacy. An hussar, whom the Emperor had particularly honoured by his notice and attention, always at night slept at his bed-room door, in the antechamber. It was impossible to remove this faithful soldier by any fair means. At this momentous period, silence reigned through the palace, except where it was disturbed by the pacing of the sentinels, or at a distance by the murmurs of the Neva; and only a

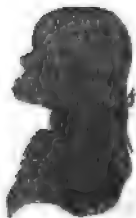
few lights were to be seen distantly and irregularly gleaming through the windows of this dark colossal abode. In the dead of the night, Z—— and his friends, amounting to eight or nine persons, passed the drawbridge, easily ascended a private staircase which led directly to the Emperor's chamber, and met with no resistance till they reached the anteroom, where the faithful hussar, awakened by the noise, challenged them, and presented his fusée. Much as they must have admired the brave fidelity of the guard, neither time nor circumstances would admit of an act of generosity which might have endangered the whole plan. Z—— drew his sabre and cut the poor fellow down. Paul, awakened by the noise, sprung from his sofa; at this moment the whole party rushed into the room: the unhappy sovereign, anticipating their design, at first endeavoured to entrench himself in the chairs and tables; then recovering, he assumed a high tone, told them they were his prisoners, and called on them to surrender. Finding that they fixed their eyes steadily and fiercely on him, and continued advancing towards him, he implored them to spare his life, declared his consent instantly to relinquish the sceptre, and to accept of any terms they would dictate. In his raving he offered to make them princes, and to give them estates, and titles, and orders, without end. They now began to press upon him, when he made a convulsive effort to reach the window; in the attempt he failed, and indeed so high was it from the ground, that, had he succeeded, the attempt would only have put an end to his misery. In the effort, he very severely cut his hand with the glass; and as they drew him back, he grasped a chair, with which he felled one of the assailants, and a desperate resistance took place. So great was the noise, that, notwithstanding the massy walls and double folding-doors which divided the apartment, the Empress was disturbed, and began to cry for help, when a voice whispered in her ear, and imperatively told her to remain quiet, otherwise she would be put to instant death. While the Emperor was thus making a last struggle, the Prince Y—— struck him on one of his temples with his

fist, and laid him upon the floor : Paul, recovering from the blow, again implored his life ; at this moment the heart of Z—— relented, and on being observed to tremble and hesitate, a young Hanoverian resolutely exclaimed, ‘ We have passed the Rubicon : if we spare his life, before the setting of to-morrow’s sun we shall be his victims.’ Upon which he took off his sash, turned it twice round the naked neck of the Emperor, and giving one end to Z—— and holding the other himself, they pulled for a considerable time with all their force, until their miserable sovereign was no more : they then retired from the palace without the least molestation, and returned to their respective homes.”*

After the accession of the new emperor, Zoubow was ordered not to approach the court, and Count P—— was transferred from the government of St. Petersburg to that of Riga. No other notice was taken of the actors in this tragedy. Whether this extraordinary lenity is to be ascribed to fear, or to a sense of the necessity of removing Paul from the throne (for the high personal character of Alexander places him above the suspicion of having been an accomplice), the late emperor would better have consulted justice, the interests of his throne, and his own reputation, if he had exacted a severer retribution for the murder of a father and a sovereign.†

* Carr’s Northern Summer.

† This sketch of Paul’s life is chiefly taken from Masson, *Mémoires Secrets sur la Russie*. Several of the anecdotes rest on Dr. Clarke’s authority.



CHAPTER V.



Early changes in the Athenian constitution—Murder of Cylon — Fatalism — Usurpation of Pisistratus — His policy — Hippias and Hipparchus—Conspiracy of Harmodius and Aristogiton—Expulsion of Hippias—Cosmo de' Medici, Lorenzo and Giuliano de' Medici — Conspiracy of the Pazzi.

FOR nearly four centuries subsequent to the age of Theseus, scarce any mention of Athens occurs in Grecian history: a circumstance honourable to that city, as denoting a long course of tranquil prosperity, and indicative of candour and veracity in the writers, who were content to relate the few incidents preserved by tradi-

tion, without taxing their imaginations to cast a fabulous splendour over an unknown period. The change of dynasty in the person of Melanthus, and the more celebrated devotion of his son Codrus,* with the alterations in the constitution subsequent to, and partly consequent upon, the death of the latter, constitute the only remarkable events during this long lapse of years; and when at length her authentic history commences, it is in consequence of the interruption of that happiness which we are led to believe she so long enjoyed. Upon the death of Codrus it was resolved that no living person could be worthy to bear the title which he had borne, and his son Medon was appointed chief magistrate, with the title of Archon, or ruler. Twelve Archons followed in hereditary succession, when a further change took place, the office being made elective, and limited to the period of ten years; and at the end of the seventh decennial Archonship the duties of the office were divided between nine persons annually elected. After this change, the possession of political supremacy became an object of strife to the Eupatridæ, or nobles, in whom all power was vested: and the Alcæonidæ, or descendants of Alcæon, the last hereditary Archon, secured the prize. Cylon, a man eminent for rank and influence, bore their superiority impatiently, and endeavoured by force of arms to make himself master of the government. He seized the citadel; but the people rose against him, and being unprovided for a siege he sought safety in flight, abandoning his followers to the rage of the adverse faction. As their best hope, they took refuge at the altars, where violence could not be offered to them without incurring the guilt of sacrilege. Megacles, the head of the Alcæonidæ, was then Archon; and by his partisans, some of the suppliants, induced to quit their refuge upon condition of personal safety, were perfidiously executed; others were put to death even at the dreaded altars of the Eumenides.† Thus far there is nothing in this

* Hist. of Greece, p. 18.

† The Furies. These goddesses were worshipped with

occurrence to distinguish it from a hundred other instances of perfidy and cruelty: it is to the remote consequences that we wish to direct the reader's attention. The Athenians, without caring for the murder, were deeply shocked at the sacrilege; insomuch that not long after, when parties had changed place, it was decreed that of those who had been concerned in it, all yet alive should be condemned to banishment, and the bones of the deceased be taken up and cast out of Attica. The exiles afterwards returned; but a prejudice long existed against their posterity, which proved no ineffectual weapon in political warfare, and twice furnished Sparta with the means of embarrassing her enemy by requiring the expulsion of some of the leading citizens of the state. The demand was aptly met by recalling to mind two similar transactions in which the principal families of Sparta had been engaged, and bidding them set the example of expiation.* It appears, however, from Aristophanes (unless the passage is merely a squib against the Lacedæmonians) that the charge of being "one of the polluted" had not, even after the lapse of one hundred and sixty years, or more, lost all its influence.†

mysterious veneration by the Athenians, who held it an ill omen to call them by their proper name, and spoke of them as the venerable goddesses (σεμνὰ θεαί), or the Eumenides, because they had been propitious (εὐμενεῖς) to Orestes after his acquittal by the court of Areopagus. This was owing partly to a general dislike of alluding to gloomy subjects, which led them, among other things, to avoid speaking openly of death or the dead (hence the phrases *οἱ καμόντες*, *οἱ κατοιχόμενοι*, those who are worn out, the departed, &c.); partly to wishing to propitiate an object of dread by fair words, as the Highlanders called fairies "men of peace," especially on a Friday, when their power was greatest, and the Lowlanders entitled them "good neighbours," and the devil himself the "goodman," keeping reverentially out of sight his territorial designation.

* See Greece, p. 55.

† Ἐκ τῶν ἀλιτηρίων σέφη-
μιγ ἐγοιέναι τῶν τῇν θεοῦ.

Ιππ. 445.

We have already mentioned that it was the insult offered to the gods, rather than the crime against man, which produced so deep a sensation. That the perpetrators of a cruel and treacherous action should be regarded with abhorrence, will not indeed surprise us: but the lasting ban entailed upon their posterity is connected with some remarkable tenets, and deserves a few words in explanation. The Greeks were firm believers in the doctrines of fatalism. Man, it was held, struggled in vain to escape from the vortex of destiny; however repugnant to his wishes, or abhorrent to his principles, he was borne on to do or suffer that which was decreed, by an irresistible force, against which even the immortal gods contended in vain. A very curious passage to this effect occurs in Herodotus. Croesus, after his defeat and captivity, sent messengers to reproach the Delphian oracle with misleading to ruin, by its false predictions, one who had merited the favour of the god by the magnificence of his offerings. The answer ran thus:—"It is impossible even for a god to escape from fate. Croesus but expiates the sin of his fifth ancestor,* who, being in the guard of the descendants of Hercules, in subservience to a woman's treachery, slew his master, and seized upon a kingdom which belonged not to him. Fain would Apollo have deferred the fall of Sardis until the time of the sons of Croesus; but he could not turn aside the Fates."† Here, coupled with the assertion of an immutable destiny, we find the not unnatural deduction that the crime of an ancestor entailed misfortune on his posterity: but this doctrine was extended much farther, and it was taught that deeds of extraordinary blackness introduced a malignant demon into the family of the offender, which poisoned its prosperity, and hurried generations yet unborn to inevitable guilt and ruin. The office of inflicting this retribution was assigned with some degree of

* Gyges. Candaules, whom he murdered, was one of the Heraclidæ, or descendants of Hercules. The story is told in Herodotus, i. 8.

† Herod. i. 91.

confusion and uncertainty to the Fates, "who follow up the transgressions of gods and men,"* to the Erinnyes, or Furies, or to Nemesis, the personification of divine displeasure. But when once these fearful visitants were established in a house, that house was marked out for misery and ruin. Such was the fate of the descendants of Pelops and Labdacus, the royal families of Argos and of Thebes, whose misfortunes have furnished a never-failing theme to the Greek tragedians, who abound in references † to the fatal curse upon these races.‡ It is from the presence of these dread ministers of wrath, visible to her inspired eyes, that Cassandra draws her fearful presages of evil in that scene, perhaps the grandest in Grecian tragedy.

"For never shall that bard, whose yelling notes
In dismal accord pierce the affrighted ear,
Forsake this house. The genius of the feast,
Drunk with the blood of man, and fired from thence
To bolder daring, ranges through the rooms
Linked with his kindred furies : these possess
The mansion, and in horrid measures chaunt

* Hesiod., Theog., 220.

† Æsch., Sept. c. Theb., 832, 951. Eurip., Phœnissæ, 1518.

‡ Some modern historical instances of a similar superstitious feeling are given lower down in the text. Its nature, however, cannot be better illustrated than by reference to the legend attaching to the family of Redgauntlet in the novel of that name. The downfall of the house of Ravenswood, in the admirable tale of the Bride of Lammermoor, though foretold and fated, is not sufficiently identified with the story of the Mermaid's Well, to be quoted on this occasion. If it were so, that work, from the severe grandeur of its serious parts, and the singularly impressive way in which all events, and all agency, human and supernatural, combine from the outset to bring about a catastrophe, foreseen and prophesied, but not the less inevitable, would offer to the English reader an excellent example of the spirit of the superstitions and tragedies here alluded to, though widely differing from them in form.

The first base deed ; recording with abhorrence
The adulterous lust which stained a brother's bed."*

So, after the catastrophe, the chorus refers to the same cause the accumulated horrors and crimes which weigh down the house of Atreus.

" O thou demon, who dost fall
On the high Tantalid hall,
Well I know thee, mighty fiend,
Who here dost ever wend,
Haunting down the double line
From father unto son !

" *Clytem.* Aye, now thy words have sense and grace,
Calling on that thrice great fiend,
The demon of this race,
For 'tis from him their bowels burn
With rage of lapping blood ;
Ere the old grief has ceased to throb,
Young gore comes on amain."†

With such ideas concerning an avenging destiny, it is no wonder that the Greeks shunned contact with the inheritors of divine anger ; and national prejudice might be more strongly raised by the sacrilege of the Alcmaeonidæ, because many of the sufferers were slain at the very altars of the Eumenides, to whom the punishment of such deeds peculiarly belonged, and whose worship had been introduced into Attica in amends for the judicial sentence which delivered Orestes from their power. In modern times an analogous persuasion concerning the fortunes of particular families has prevailed ; in illustration of which we may cite the belief in the ill-luck of the Stuarts, a belief almost justified by the series of calamities and bloody deaths which beset the princes of that house : and, indeed, this faith in the influence of misconduct to produce hereditary misfortune has been

* Potter's *Æschylus* : *Agam.*, 1157 ; ed. Blomf. We give the translation as we find it, and are not answerable for the rendering of *Kῶμος* *ξυγγόνων Ἐρινύων*.

† Symmons' *Agamemnon* ; 1444, ed. Blomf.

general in Ireland and the Scottish Highlands, and probably in other countries where a vivid imagination is found in union with no high degree of cultivation and knowledge. In Ireland it is the popular creed, that an estate gained by fraud brings a curse along with it* (to

* A similar belief existed in England with respect to the alienations of church property at the Reformation, of which the following is a remarkable instance.

Sir Walter Raleigh was gifted by Queen Elizabeth with the lands of Sherborne in Dorsetshire, which had been bequeathed by Osmund, a Norman knight, to the see of Canterbury, with a heavy denunciation against any rash or profane person who should attempt to wrest them from the church. This anathema was, in the opinion of the vulgar, first accomplished in the person of the Protector Somerset, to whom, after sundry vicissitudes, the property belonged. This nobleman was hunting in the woods of Sherborne when his presence was required by Edward the Sixth, and he was shortly afterwards committed to the Tower, and subsequently beheaded. The forfeited estate then lapsed to the See of Salisbury until the reign of Elizabeth, to whom it was made over by the bishop, at the instigation of Raleigh, who was blamed, and apparently with justice, for having displayed on this occasion a grasping and even dishonourable spirit. So strong were the religious prejudices of the day, that even the discerning Sir John Harrington attributed to a judgment from heaven a trifling accident which occurred to Raleigh while surveying the demesne which he coveted. Casting his eyes upon it, according to the notion of that writer, as Ahab did upon Naboth's vineyard, and, in the course of a journey from Plymouth to the coast, discussing at the same time the advantages of the desired possession, Sir Walter's horse fell, and the face of the rider, then, as the relater observes, "thought to be a very good one," was buried in the ground. After Raleigh's fall the estate was seized by James the First, who wished to bestow it on his favourite, Car, Earl of Somerset; but Prince Henry interfered, and obtained possession, intending to restore it to the owner. The prince's death, however, frustrated his intentions, and left Sherborne still in the favourite's hands. The premature death of this promising youth was thought by the vulgar again to corroborate the old prophecy. To Carew, the youngest son, and the

open force they seem to be more indulgent); that the possessor becomes a doomed man, and neither he nor his descendants prosper. In Scotland it was thought that a pious parent entailed a blessing upon his offspring, while the punishment of the wicked and oppressor, if not immediately manifested upon himself, or his children, yet surely descended even on succeeding generations. This feeling extended to all classes; and a striking instance of it is connected with the massacre of Glencoe, the blackest incident in Scottish history. Colonel Campbell, of Glenlyon, grandson of Glenlyon, who commanded the military upon that fatal day, being with his regiment at Havannah, was ordered to superintend the execution of a soldier condemned to be shot. A reprieve was sent, but with directions that no person was to be told of it until the prisoner was on his knees prepared to receive the volley, not even the firing party, who were informed that the signal would be the waving of a white handkerchief by the commanding officer. "When all was prepared, and the prisoner in momentary expectation of his fate, Colonel Campbell put his hand into his pocket for the reprieve, and in pulling out the packet, the white handkerchief accompanied it, and catching the eyes of the party, they fired, and the unfortunate prisoner was shot dead. The paper dropped through Colonel Campbell's fingers, and clapping his hand to his forehead, he exclaimed, "The curse of God and of Glencoe is here! I am an unfortunate, ruined man." He soon after retired from the service, not from any reflection or reprimand on account of this melancholy affair, for it was known to be entirely accidental. The

injured survivor of Sir Walter, the subsequent attainer of Car, and the forfeiture of his estates upon his committal to the Tower, appeared to confirm the ill fortune attendant upon the owners of Sherborne; and the misfortunes which afterwards befell the house of Stuart were also considered by him to corroborate the old presage. On the confiscation of Car's estates, Digby, Earl of Bristol, obtained Sherborne from the king, and in his family it now remains.—*Life of Sir W. Raleigh, by Mrs. Thomson, chap. vi.*

impression upon his mind, however, was never effaced. Nor is the massacre, and the judgment which the people believe has fallen on the descendants of the principal actors in this tragedy, effaced from their recollection. They carefully note, that while the family of the unfortunate gentleman who suffered is still entire, and his estate preserved in direct male succession to his posterity, this is not the case with the family, posterity, and estate of those who were the principals, promoters, and actors in this black affair."*

In addition to the strife of faction consequent upon Cylon's attempt, Athens was convulsed by discord between the rich and poor, arising from the oppressive rights possessed by creditors over the persons of their debtors, and the difficulty experienced by indigent freemen in supporting themselves by their own exertions, in consequence of the general prevalence of slave labour. Solon was appointed archon, with power to remodel the constitution; and having done so, he quitted Athens, and remained abroad, it is said, for ten years, the people having engaged not to alter his institutions within that time. But to put an end to faction was beyond his power. The landholders of Attica were divided into three parties, denominated from the lowlands, the highlands, and the coast. The first consisted chiefly of the nobility, the great proprietors; the second were a poorer class, among whom the democratical interest predominated; and the third, consisting in a great degree of men engaged in trade, held an intermediate station, both in circumstances and politics. Lycurgus headed the first party; Megacles was chief of the third; and during the absence of Solon, Pisistratus, with whom we are more immediately concerned, advanced to eminence, and assumed the direction of the second. Of his early life few particulars have reached us; it is only said that he was distinguished by eloquence and military talents, which he displayed on different occasions in the wars against Megara. Not long after Solon's return,

* Stewart, Sketches of Highlanders, part i. sect. xii.

Pisistratus came in his chariot into the market-place, complaining that, in consequence of the jealousy excited by his support of the democratical interest, his life had been attempted while he was on his road into the country, in confirmation of which he exhibited wounds upon his own person and upon his mules. Whether the story were true or false, has been controverted, and must remain a matter of opinion; but that it was a fiction, seems to have been generally thought by the ancient writers. At all events, the people believed the tale, and a body of guards was decreed him, the numbers of which were gradually augmented, until he was enabled to gain possession of the Acropolis, or citadel, and, in the language of Greece, became tyrant* of Athens.

Death and confiscation being the usual concomitants of a Grecian revolution, it was a matter of course that the leaders of the defeated party should consult their safety by flight; and accordingly, Megacles, with the other chiefs of the Alcæonidæ, withdrew from Athens. The terms on which he was invited to return, which happened soon after, are curious and characteristic. He was distinguished by victories gained in the public games of Greece, and during his exile he had conquered in the chariot-race at the Olympic festival. The condition of his restoration was, that the glory of this success should be ascribed to Pisistratus.† It may be doubted, though horse-racing in modern days, and chivalrous exercises in the middle ages, have been cultivated with ardour by men distinguished by birth and station, whether the possession of the best horses in the world has at any

* The proper meaning of this word will form the subject of a future article; meanwhile it is sufficient to observe, that it will never be employed here to denote specifically a blood-thirsty and oppressive ruler, but merely one who has raised himself to a degree of power unauthorised by the constitution of his country.

† Schol. in Nub. Meurs. Pisistratus. This story is told of Cimon, the father of Miltiades, instead of Megacles, by Herodotus, vi. 103.

time since availed to procure the forgiveness of a political enemy. But the high estimation of such honours forms a striking feature in the Grecian character. We know from Homer, that, long previous to the institution of public games, princes contended with each other in athletic exercises: and when stated times were set aside, at which the flower of all Greece might vie in displaying strength and activity under the sanction and with all the pomp of religion, and the victor was rewarded by the acclamations of his assembled countrymen, it is no wonder that a nation highly imaginative and susceptible of the love of fame should have been led to set an extravagant price upon the superiority in qualities whose value was in truth great in times when the arm of one man was sufficient to decide a battle, but diminished proportionably to the progress of art and science. The chariot-race almost always formed a part of these games; and naturally, for when warriors fought from chariots, the possession of the best horses was a valuable distinction. This method of warfare had been disused long before the time of Pisistratus; but the chariot-race still formed a part, perhaps the most important one, in the Grecian games. And the welcome of a conquering general to his native city was less distinguished than that of an Olympic victor, whose prowess reflected honour upon the state which gave him birth: and thus such triumphs, by gratifying popular vanity, might become important, even to the interests of a statesman.

The year 560 B.C. is fixed as that of Pisistratus's usurpation. The union of Megacles and Lycurgus produced his expulsion, after he had possessed the tyranny, it is thought, for about six years; of the transactions during which we have no information. He remained in banishment for an equal time, when the enmity between the united factions broke out afresh, and Megacles, to establish his superiority, brought back Pisistratus, connecting their interests by giving him his daughter in marriage. To gain the consent of the Athenians to his return, they devised a plan, characterised by Herodotus, from whom we have the story, as a most simple device to ensnare a

people distinguished for intellect and very far removed from a simple good-nature. In one of the boroughs of Attica there lived a woman named Phya, of extraordinary stature, and withal of handsome person, whom they selected to personate the patron Goddess of Athens; and having carefully instructed her how to act her part, they dressed her in appropriate armour, placed her in a chariot, and sent her into the city, preceded by heralds, making proclamation, "O Athenians, receive with favour Pisistratus, whom Athene,* honouring him above all men, herself brings back unto her own Acropolis." The news flew abroad throughout Attica, that Athene had brought back Pisistratus, and those who were in the city, believing that it was the Goddess, paid divine honours to a mortal, and received the exile.†

His prosperity, however, was of very short duration : a domestic quarrel is said to have produced his expulsion a second time, about a year after his return, and he remained in banishment for a period of ten years, at the end of which his son Hippias, who had now attained manhood, induced him to attempt the recovery of his power. Thebes, Argos, and other cities assisted him with loans, by means of which he collected an army; and sailing from Eretria, where he had fixed his abode, he disembarked at Marathon, was joined by many of his countrymen, and defeating the ruling party, for the third time became master of Athens. Both now and formerly his success was characterised by moderation and lenity; for his only measure of precaution against future conspiracies was to take as hostages the children of such of his chief opponents as chose to remain in Athens, who were committed to the charge of Lygdamis, the friendly ruler of Naxos.

That Pisistratus's temper and character were mild and amiable, is proved by the bloodless nature of the revolutions which he effected; and confirmed even by the testimony of those authors who have endeavoured to raise

* Or Pallas, the Latin Minerva.

† Herod. i. 60.

the reputation of Solon at his expense, by narrating many not very probable stories of the sage's pertinacious opposition to his schemes of advancement. That Solon saw and lamented the ambition of Pisistratus is probable, but we learn upon the same authority that they lived on terms of intimacy and esteem from the return of the former until his death; and Plutarch, whose object was to exalt the patriot philosopher, has yet, in doing so, drawn a most favourable picture of the tyrant. "He was courteous, and marvellously faire spoken, and showed himself beside very good and pitifull to the poore, and temperate also to his enemies: further, if any good quality were lacking in him, he did so finely counterfeit it, that men imagined it was more in him, than in those that naturally had it in them indeed. As, to be a quiet man, no meddler, contented with his owne, aspiring no higher, and hating those which would attempt to change the present state of the Common Wealth, and would practise any innovation. By this art, and fine manner of his, he deceived the poore common people. Howbeit Solon found him out straight, and saw the mark he shot at: but yet hated him not at that time, and sought still to win him, and bring him to reason, saying oft times, both to himselfe and to others, that whoso could pluck out of his head the worme of ambition, by which he aspired to be the chiefest, and could heale him of his greedy desire to rule, there could not be a man of more virtue, nor a better citizen than he would prove."* He adds a strong testimony to the beneficent administration of Pisistratus, in saying that Solon afterwards became one of his council; and while Herodotus has distinctly asserted that he ruled Athens honourably and well, neither changing the magistracies nor altering the laws, we learn from other authorities that he adhered to the regulations of Solon. And it is to his credit that he obeyed a citation to appear before the court of Areopagus, on a charge of murder, even if we grant that he ran little risk of being condemned; for it shows pru-

* Plut. vit. Solon.

dence, and good sense, and good feeling, that he chose rather to wear the appearance of submission to authority, than to outrage popular opinion by the visible assumption of irresponsible power. Of his lenity towards those who personally offended or injured him, several stories are told. A young man who was attached to his daughter, with the help of his friends carried her off forcibly from a sacrifice upon the sea-shore, at which she was assisting. Their galley was intercepted by Hippias, who was then cruising in search of pirates, and they were led captives to Athens. Being brought before the injured father, they scorned to use the language of entreaty, boldly declaring that they had held death cheap from the time of undertaking the enterprise. Pisistratus, struck with the high spirit of the youth, gave his daughter in marriage to the principal, and thus converted dangerous enemies into valuable and attached friends.* The above extract from Plutarch bears witness to his charity, which yet was not indiscriminate, nor abused to the encouragement of idleness; against which he not only enacted laws, but would inquire of any one whom he saw unemployed in the market-place, whether it were owing to the want of agricultural implements, and if it were so, he would supply the deficiency.

In this, however, perhaps policy was as much concerned as charity. Having obtained his power through the support of the democratical party, it was now his object to consolidate and establish it upon the downfall of that interest, by removing the multitude as far as possible from the city, and compelling them to follow agricultural labour. Another reason might be the improvement of the revenue, towards which he exacted the tithes of all agricultural produce. A humorous story is told of an old man, who was found by him cultivating a stubborn and rocky piece of ground. "What harvest can you derive from thence?" he said. "Aches and blisters, and the tithe of them goes to Pisistratus." The answer was well received, and procured for him an

* Meursius, Pisistratus.

immunity from the tax. On this subject, however, Pisistratus's conduct was generally unjust and oppressive, for he not only forced the poorer Athenians to a rural life, but excluded them from the city, and made them wear a particular dress, that this exclusion might be the better enforced. At the same time he proved himself not indifferent to their interest, by appointing a public provision for those who were wounded in the public service.

It were much to be wished that our information concerning the policy of Pisistratus and the public affairs of Athens during his administration were more minute; but the total silence of history concerning this period indicates at least that it was one of tranquillity and happiness. We have seen already that his private character was amiable; it remains to be added that his tastes were elegant and his mind cultivated. By many he is included in the list of worthies distinguished as the seven sages of Greece; indeed all writers who mention him bear testimony to the successful cultivation of his mental powers; and he possesses a strong claim to the gratitude of the world at large, if it be true that he collected and rendered into order the scattered fragments of Homer's poems before they were irretrievably corrupted and confused by the inaccuracies of oral tradition.† And he scarcely deserves less credit for having been the first to establish a public library: an institution

* Meurs. Pisistratus.

† He is accused, however, of having interpolated several lines to gratify Athenian vanity, and one with a deeper view; that, namely, which says of Ajax, that he ranged his own alongside of the Athenian ships (Il. ii. 558) with the purpose of strengthening Athens' claim to Salamis, then hotly contested by Megara. The Megarian versions said, on the other hand, that Ajax led ships from Salamis, and from Polichne, Nisæa, and other towns of Megaris. Both this trick, and the credit of collecting Homer's poems, are ascribed by other authors to Solon. Some eminent modern scholars have doubted whether this arrangement and revision ever took place.—See Knight, *Proleg. ad Hom.* § 4, 5.

most valuable in all ages and places, but especially before the introduction of printing, when the price of books rendered it impossible for any but the wealthy to possess them. He also devoted much of his attention and revenue to the embellishment of the city; he built fountains, and a gymnasium, or place of exercise; he threw his private gardens open to the public; he dedicated a temple to the Pythian Apollo, and had commenced another to Olympian Zeus, the Latin Jupiter, when his labours were interrupted by death, *B.C.* 527, after he had enjoyed for ten years in tranquillity the sovereignty which he had pursued for so many anxious years. He left a name adorned by many virtues and accomplishments, and blemished apparently only by one great fault, ambition: but this, the master-passion of his life, has sullied his numerous great and good qualities, as a tainted fountain pollutes the whole stream. Had he been a rightful sovereign, he might have been hailed as the father of his country: instead of which his fellow-citizens saw in him only the parent of a hated and proscribed race, and later ages "damn him with the faint praise" of being the best of tyrants.

His sons Hipparchus and Hippias* appear to have succeeded quietly to his authority; which they shared in common, Hipparchus filling the more prominent station. Their father's virtues descended to them, and Athens for some time flourished under their guidance. The strong expression of Plato is, that the Athenians lived as in old times under the reign of Saturn. He goes on to say that Hipparchus made the collection of Homer's poems which others have ascribed to Pisistratus, and caused them to be publicly read in the order of their arrange-

* Much doubt has arisen which of these was the elder. Thucydides says, contrary to the general opinion, that it was Hippias, and he seems to be corroborated by Herodotus; but it is a question of no importance, and not worth discussion. Pisistratus left a third legitimate son, named Thessalus, of whom scarce any mention is made in history, and a natural son, Hegesistratus, established by his father as tyrant of Sigeum, on the Hellespont.

ment at the Panathenaic festival ; and further displayed his taste in the patronage of Anacreon and Simonides, whom he induced by his liberality to take up their abode in Athens. And having thus provided for the mental cultivation of the citizens, he turned his attention to the improvement of the rustic population, and with this view caused Hermæ* to be erected in the main streets of the city and boroughs, upon which he inscribed in verse the most pithy maxims which he had heard or invented, that so the countrymen, wandering about, might taste of his wisdom, and come from the fields and woods to be further instructed in it. Two of these sentences are preserved—"The memorial of Hipparchus. Do not deceive a friend." "The memorial of Hipparchus. Depart, meditating justice." Further, we have the testimony of Thucydides, that he oppressed not the many, but bore himself ever inoffensively, and that "these tyrants held virtue and wisdom in great account for a long time, and taking of the Athenians but a twentieth part of their revenues, (they diminished, therefore, Pisistratus's impost by one half,) adorned the city, managed their wars, and performed the rights of their religion. In other points they were governed by the laws formerly established, save that they took care ever to prefer to the magistracy men of their own adherence." Thus fourteen years they ruled in peace and honour, when at length a single act of oppression and insult, a moment's violation of the maxims of temperance and virtue, which their conduct as well as their precepts enforced, produced a revolution upon which probably the destinies of all Greece have hinged.

Hipparchus had conceived a personal ill-will towards an Athenian citizen named Harmodius, which he vented by insulting publicly the offender's sister. Another citizen, Aristogiton, had reasons of his own for wishing ill to Hipparchus: he stimulated his friend Harmodius to a keener sense of the injury, and they resolved to

* Statues of Hermes, the Latin Mercury, consisting of a square pillar surmounted by a head of the god.

wash away their wrongs in blood. But few associates were admitted to the knowledge of their plot, which was to be executed at the Panathenaic festival, when it was usual for all persons to appear in arms. Hipparchus alone was personally offensive; but to dissolve the tyranny, and to secure themselves from retribution, Hippias was to be involved in his brother's fate. On the morning of the festival, while Hippias, attended by his guards, was in the Ceramicus,* ordering the procession, Harmodius and Aristogiton saw one of the conspirators conversing with him familiarly, "for Hippias was accessible to all." Thinking themselves betrayed, they resolved, at least, to take vengeance on the more obnoxious party, and hastened to seek Hipparchus, whom they slew. Harmodius was slain in the tumult which ensued. Aristogiton escaped for a time, but was soon after taken and put to death.

The news being brought instantly to Hippias before others had heard it, he dissembled his emotion, and bade the citizens repair to a certain spot without their arms, as if he wished to address them previous to the procession. He then summoned his guard, and selected from the assembled multitude all whom he suspected, or found armed with daggers, a weapon not generally worn by those celebrating the festival. Thus for the present he preserved his power; but his temper was changed by the danger which he had escaped, and his government became jealous and intolerable. Many were slain, and many fled to join the exiled Alcmaeonidæ, whose cause became daily more popular at Athens, and throughout the rest of Greece, until at length they gained strength sufficient to enable them, with the assistance of Lacedæmon, to lay siege to Hippias in Athens, in the fourth year after the death of Hipparchus. The city, however, was strong and well provisioned; and he might have baffled their patience, but for a fortunate chance which threw his children, with those of his lead-

* A space in the city, surrounded by public buildings, in which the people usually held their meetings.

ing partisans, into the hands of the assailants. Parental anxiety prevailed, and the town surrendered, on condition that the obnoxious should receive no injury, but should quit Attica within five days. Hippias retired to Sigeum. When advanced in years, he accompanied the armament of Darius in hope of recovering his sovereignty; it was he that counselled its descent upon the plain of Marathon, where once before he had landed under a better star, and he is reported by Cicero to have been slain in the memorable battle which ensued.*

After the expulsion of Hippias, the memory of Harmodius and Aristogiton was hallowed by the Athenians in every way which the imagination of a grateful people could devise. Brazen statues were erected in honour of them (by the side of which, in after-times, those of Brutus and Cassius were placed), their descendants were gifted in perpetuity with the privilege of eating in the Prytaneum† at the public cost, with select places at the public spectacles, and with immunity from taxes: their names, forbidden to be borne by slaves, were ordered to be celebrated at all future Panathenaic festivals: and if the orators of Athens wished to find a theme agreeable to national vanity, it was to the praises of the tyrant-killers, or the events of the Persian war, that they resorted. Yet, after all these tributes of admiration, it is asserted by Æschines, that "a temperate and governed feeling so modified the character of those benefactors of the state, men supereminent in all virtues, that those who have panegyrised their deeds do yet appear therein to have fallen short of the things performed by them." This extravagant, or probably pretended, enthusiasm may be endured, though not commended, as a privilege

* Ad. Att. lib. ix. 10.

† In modern language this would be the town-hall. There was a table kept here for the Prytanes (the officers presiding in the senate for the time being), and to have the right of eating here (*στρωσις ἐν Πρυτανείῳ*) was one of the greatest honours that his country could bestow on an Athenian.

assumed by advocates and public speakers in all ages : but we cannot extend the same toleration to Simonides, who had benefited by the friendship and liberality of the deceased, when he asserts " that a light broke upon Athens when Harmodius and Aristogiton slew Hipparchus." Their exploit was a favourite subject of the odes* with which the musical Athenians enlivened their entertainments, one of which, composed by Callistratus, has been preserved, and is esteemed among the noblest specimens of the lyric muse of Greece.

I'll wreath my sword in myrtle bough,
The sword that laid the tyrant low,
When patriots, burning to be free,
To Athens gave equality.

Harmodius, hail ! though reft of breath,
Thou ne'er shalt feel the stroke of death ;
The heroes' happy isles† shall be
The bright abode allotted thee.

* Allusions to the affection with which these patriots were regarded, both generally and with reference to this custom, are frequent in Aristophanes.—See *l'arr.* 786, *Ἀχαρν.* 980, *Σφ.* 1225.

† Not the Hesperides, but an island called Achilleia, or Leuce, at the mouth of the Danube, consecrated to Achilles, where his tomb was visible. The hero, however, must have been there in proper person, since he espoused either Helen or Iphigenia, and had a son by her. Here he dwelt in perpetual youth, with Diomed, the Ajaxes, and other heroes. Many mythological tales are related concerning the island. Birds swept and sprinkled the temple of Achilles with water from their wings : passing vessels often heard the sound of sweet yet awe-inspiring music ; others distinguished the din of arms and horses and the shouts of battle. If vessels anchored for the night off the island, Achilles and Helen would come on board, drink with the sailors, and sing them the verses of Homer, with particulars of their personal adventures, even of the most delicate description. Once a man who ventured to sleep upon the island was awoken by Achilles, and taken home to sup with him, when the hero played the lyre, and Patroclus served wine : Thetis and

I 'll wreath the sword in myrtle bough,
The sword that laid Hipparchus low,
When at Minerva's adverse fane
He knelt, and never rose again.

While Freedom's name is understood,
You shall delight the wise and good ;
You dared to set your country free,
And gave her laws equality.*

Nevertheless there seems not to be the smallest ground for supposing that the actors in this tragedy were guided by patriotic motives. The authors who speak of it vary somewhat in the circumstances which they relate, but all agree that it was a private quarrel, a personal offence, which inspired their resolution and their hatred. Many have been the instances in which the wantonness of power exercised on an individual has proved fatal to men who have trampled unopposed upon the liberties of their country, as if it were beneficially ordained that the vices of individuals should work out the general good.

But though this conspiracy can in no respect be regarded as the proximate cause of the re-establishment of democracy ; though neither its motives nor its effects, so far as we can judge after the long lapse of ages, merit the encomiums which have been showered on them so profusely, it nevertheless affected vitally the interests of Athens, and, through her, of the civilised world. The mind need indeed be far-sighted and acute which presumes to trace the changes which a single deviation from the ordained course of events would have produced ; yet it is neither uninteresting nor uninformative to consider in what way a nation's destiny might have been modified, and to observe the natural connexion by which crime results from intemperance and injustice, misfortune and misconduct from crime ; while the melancholy series is still overruled to restore freedom to an injured

other gods were there. Many other stories, equally amusing and no less worthy of credit, are related concerning this wonderful place.—*Bayle, art. Achilleia.*

† Bland, Anthology

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people, and to punish the ambition which produced such fatal effects. From the apparently uninterrupted content which prevailed at Athens during a period of twenty-four years, from the last return of Pisistratus to the death of Hipparchus, there is good reason to believe that, but for private enmity, the brothers might have borne uninterrupted sway for the natural period of their lives. That of Hippias was prolonged for twenty-three years; making a sufficient period in the whole to have habituated the Athenians to usurpation, and to have enabled him to transfer the sceptre to his children as easily as he received it from his father. Athens, thus converted, like the Ionian cities, into a tyranny,* would probably have offered no more effectual progress than they did to the Persian power, and without her assistance all Greece would have fallen under the dominion of the King.† To pursue the subject further would be both rash and useless: it is obvious that such an event would have exercised a most powerful influence over the subsequent history of mankind: to define that influence would be difficult to the most penetrating and comprehensive understanding, and the attempt would be presumption here.

In the Italian republics of the middle ages we find the age of Greece revived, though on a smaller scale and with diminished splendour. They exhibit in the same colours the results of multiplying small independent states, where every citizen may feel that he has an individual as well as a general interest in public affairs, and every city that she is concerned in the domestic quarrels of her neighbours. The effects of such a system are manifest alike in either country: the good, in the remarkable number of distinguished men produced by them; the bad, in the prevalence of external aggression

* See Herod. iv. 137, for the change in policy arising from such a change in constitution.

† *Βασιλεὺς*. The king, simply and by pre-eminence,—the title by which the Persian monarch was universally known in Greece.

and internal discord, signalised alike by political acuteness, unblushing profligacy, and revolting cruelty. Above all, Florence and Athens are naturally associated by their kindred eminence in art and literature; they were alike distinguished for the mercurial temper and lively imagination of their citizens, and political resemblances are not wanting to complete the comparison. The early changes in the Florentine constitution, the gradual depression of the nobles, by the rise of the commons to wealth and importance, their exclusion from public offices and honours, the elevation of a plebeian aristocracy upon the ruins of the feudal nobility, and the division of the commons into an oligarchical and a democratical party, are briefly and clearly related in Perceval's History of Italy, and may not inaptly be compared to the gradual subversion of the Athenian Eupatridæ. Towards the close of the fourteenth century, the oligarchy, headed by the family of Albizzi, succeeded in obtaining possession of the government, which it held for fifty years with a mild and undisturbed sway. But their opponents, though silent, were not crushed: as new families gained wealth by trade, they grew impatient of political inferiority and exclusion: and the Medici, one of the most distinguished houses of the popular nobles, who had long ranked in opposition to the Albizzi, were naturally regarded as the stay of the democratic cause. It was at this time that Cosmo de' Medici appeared in public life. The characters and adventures of this distinguished man and of his immediate descendants offer a singular number of coincidences with those of Pisistratus and his family.

At the beginning of the fifteenth century, Giovanni, the father of Cosmo, was the most distinguished person of his house and party. The great wealth which he had acquired by commercial adventure was set off by generosity and unblemished integrity: and though hereditarily opposed to the ruling faction, his own disinclination to interfere in politics, and the moderation of his opponents, left him in undisturbed possession of his riches and influence. To these his son Cosmo succeeded,

and being possessed of greater talents and a more stirring ambition, he took an active part in public life, and became the recognised leader of the popular party. The older heads, under whose temperate guidance Florence had enjoyed a long interval of tranquillity, were now deceased, and Rinaldo degl' Albizzi, a young man of inferior judgment and stronger passions, had succeeded to their influence. He observed and endeavoured to check the growing spirit of discontent, and thereby hastened a crisis which he was unprepared to meet. By his machinations Cosmo was brought to trial upon a frivolous and unfounded charge, and though his life, which was aimed at, was preserved by a judicious bribe, he was convicted and sentenced to banishment for ten years. He quietly submitted to the decree, and retired to Venice, where he was received with distinguished honour: but Rinaldo had miscalculated his strength; the next year a set of magistrates came into office who were attached to the Medici, and by them the dominant family was overthrown and expelled, and Cosmo triumphantly recalled.

The youth then of Pisistratus and of the Florentine commenced under the same political aspect, and was marked by the same adventures; but the advantage thus far is clearly on the side of the latter, who owed his first elevation to hereditary distinction and to his own merit, and his recall to the voice of his countrymen constitutionally expressed. And the resemblance of their youth holds good through their maturer years: they alike retained their sway to the end of a prosperous life, and alike employed it with beneficence and moderation; for though the triumph of Cosmo was not unstained by blood, and he hesitated not to ensure its stability, when threatened, by the exile of his opponents and the retrenchment of popular rights, yet his measures seem dictated by prudence, not by revenge: they are unpolluted by the atrocious cruelties so common in Italian party contests, and Florence prospered, and was respected under his administration. He avoided, even more than Pisistratus, the ostentation of that power which it would

have been nobler not to have possessed ; and presented to the world the spectacle of a merchant raised to the head of a powerful state, pursuing his original profession with industry and success, and declining the alliance of sovereigns to marry his children among his fellow-citizens, whom he treated as if they were in reality, no less than in appearance, his equals. No superior magnificence distinguished his establishment or his table ; but his wealth was profusely employed in distributing favours to all around him, until there was scarce a man of his party who was not bound to him by some personal tie. To this happy temper, and to the simplicity of his tastes and manners, he owes the enyiable reputation which he has gained. Had he assumed the ostentation of a prince, which his riches and power might well have warranted, the obligations which he dispensed would have carried with them the impress of servitude. But men forgive injuries more easily than mortifications, and his fellow-citizens reconciled themselves to the unconstitutional superiority of one who treated them in every-day life as his equals, or displayed his elevation only in the extent of his generosity, and a freer cultivation and patronage of all that is fascinating in art and literature.

We have described Cosmo de' Medici as exercising a power little less than regal in a republic whose magistrates were changed every two months, and in which he neither possessed ostensible office and authority, nor that armed support which has often enabled usurpers to dispense with all other title. The reader, therefore, may be at a loss to understand the nature of his influence ; it is explained in the following passage. "The authority which Cosmo and his descendants exercised in Florence, during the sixteenth century, was of a very peculiar nature, and consisted rather in a tacit influence on their part, and a voluntary acquiescence on that of the people, than in any prescribed or definite compact between them. The form of government was ostensibly a republic, and was directed by a government of ten citizens, and a chief executive officer, called the gonfaloniere, or standard-bearer, who was chosen every two

months. Under this establishment the citizens imagined they enjoyed the full exercise of their liberties ; but such was the power of the Medici, that they generally either assumed to themselves the first offices of the state, or nominated such persons as they thought proper to those employments. In this, however, they paid great respect to popular opinion. That opposition of interests, so generally apparent between the people and their rulers, was at this time scarcely perceived at Florence, where superior qualifications and industry were the surest recommendations to public authority and favour ; and, satisfied that they could at any time withdraw themselves from a connexion that exacted no engagements, and required only a temporary acquiescence, the Florentines considered the Medici as the fathers, and not the rulers of the republic. On the other hand, the chiefs of this house, by appearing rather to decline than to court the honours bestowed upon them, and by a singular moderation in the use of them when obtained, were careful to maintain the character of simple citizens of Florence, and servants of the state. An interchange of reciprocal good offices was the only tie by which the Florentines and the Medici were bound, and perhaps the long continuance of their connexion may be attributed to the very circumstance of its being in the power of either of the parties at any time to have dissolved it.”* The state of things described in a former part of this passage corresponds with what the Greeks called tyranny, and in the same sense in which Pisistratus was tyrant of Athens, Cosmo and Lorenzo de’ Medici were tyrants of Florence. But in his remarks upon the nature of their power, Mr. Roscoe’s partialities appear to have led him astray. The Medici, from their brilliant qualities, were possessed of the affections of a large portion of their countrymen, and it so chanced, therefore, that the one were as ready to submit as the other to command. But it will scarcely be believed that the connexion with a family which had usurped the entire command of the

* Life of Lorenzo de’ Medici, chap. i.

state, the sole disposal of the magistracies, could have been dissolved at any time ; or indeed that it could ever have been dissolved, except by force of arms : and the praise of moderation, however applicable to the two elder Medici, is scarcely due to Lorenzo, who abolished even the shadow of a popular magistracy, and asserted the dependence of all functionaries upon himself,* whose expenditure was upon a scale of regal extravagance, and who made his country bankrupt to prevent the bankruptcy of his house. For he carried on the vast commercial establishment by which his grandfather Cosmo had acquired wealth ; but with such different success, that he was compelled to debase the national currency to raise means for meeting his mercantile engagements.

Cosmo, resembling Pisistratus in the elegance of his taste, lived, like him, at a time which enabled him to confer singular benefits upon society. To the Athenian we probably owe the preservation of Homer's poems in a connected form ; to the Florentine and to his family we are mainly indebted for those treasures of ancient literature which time has spared ; which, four centuries ago, were rapidly decaying in obscurity, or, by a more ignoble fate, were defaced to make room for lying legends and scholastic quibbles, until, early in the fifteenth century, a few enlightened spirits eagerly devoted themselves to rescuing what still remained. The vast wealth of Cosmo and his extensive correspondence were ever ready to be employed in the service of learning ; at the request of the men of letters, by whom he loved to be surrounded, his agents were continually charged to buy or to have copied whatever manuscripts could be found in Europe or Asia ; he founded public libraries, and among them that which is still named after his grandson, the Laurentian, and supported the cause of literature by affording countenance to all who cultivated it with success. His mansions were filled with gems, statues, and paintings, the master-pieces of ancient and modern art, and he was the friend no less than the pro-

* Sismondi, chap. xc.

tector of Donatello and Masaccio, to whom sculpture and painting respectively are much indebted for their rapid advance. Nor was he so much absorbed by these tastes, or by affairs of state, as to neglect his domestic concerns, and the flourishing condition of his estates of Careggi and Caffagiuolo bore witness to his skill and attention to agriculture, as did his foreign dealings to his mercantile knowledge and success.

Architecture, however, was his favourite pursuit. Like Pisistratus, he spent vast sums in ornamenting his city, and if his glory as a patron of the art be inferior to that of Pericles—if he cannot boast, like Augustus, that he found Florence of brick, and left it of marble, he has one claim to our praise which neither they nor probably any other public improver of ancient or modern times has possessed, namely, that the expenses of his works were defrayed from his private fortune. It appears from a memorandum of his grandson, Lorenzo, that in thirty-seven years their house had spent in buildings, charities, and contributions to the state, no less than 663,755 golden florins, equivalent to more than 1,300,000*l.* of the present day. The magnificent edifice known as the Riccardi palace was built by Michelozzi for Cosmo's residence; under his patronage the dome of the Florentine cathedral was reared; he built churches and convents, the enumeration of which would be tedious, and erected a palace upon each of his four country estates. To these retreats he betook himself in his declining years, and, estranged from politics and surrounded by men of letters, he passed the evening of his life in tranquillity, unmolested by any enemy except the gout. Its close alone was clouded by the death of his younger son, whom he regarded as the destined supporter of his name and grandeur, for the bad health of the elder incapacitated him for an active life; and the aged statesman, as he was carried through the vast palace which he had no longer strength to traverse on foot, exclaimed with a sigh, "This house is too large for so small a family." He died within a year of his son, in 1464, loved by his friends, and regretted even by his enemies, who dreaded

the rapacity of his partisans when restrained no longer by the probity and moderation of their chief; and Florence bore the best witness to his virtues, when she inscribed on his tomb the title of Father of his Country.

Piero de' Medici, his eldest son, in name succeeded to his father's influence; but owing to his infirmities he resided chiefly in the country, while, under shelter of the respected name of Medici, a few citizens monopolized the administration of justice and the management of the state, and converted both to their own private and corrupt emolument. He died in 1469, leaving two sons, Lorenzo, named the Magnificent, and Giuliano; the former being less than twenty-one years of age, and the latter five years his junior. Had the Florentines still been animated by their ancient spirit, there was now a most favourable opportunity for the recovery of liberty: but, under various pretexts, most of the distinguished families under whom the people might have ranked themselves had been driven into exile, and the personal virtues of Cosmo, and his unquestioned pre-eminence as a party leader, had laid the foundations of an hereditary influence, and prepared a way for the entire change of the constitution. So fully was the predominant party aware of this, that the men who had ruled Florence in the name of Piero, but without reference to his will, and who had embittered the close of his life by their profligacy and corruption, instead of profiting by the youth of his sons to shake off this nominal subjection, were eager to ascribe to them a power which they did not possess. They took measures to continue, under an empty name, a junto which assured to them the distribution of all places and the disposal of the revenue. The ambassadors who had been used to treat with Thomas Soderini, the citizens who had long been aware that their fortunes depended on his favour, hastened to visit him, upon the death of Piero. But Soderini feared to rouse the jealousy of his associates, and to weaken his party by accepting these marks of respect. He sent the citizens who waited on him to the

young Medici, as the only chiefs of the state; he assembled the men of most importance, and presenting Lorenzo and his brother, advised them to preserve to those young men the credit which their house had enjoyed during thirty-five years, and suggested that it was far easier to maintain a power already strengthened by time than to found a new one.

The Medici received with modesty the marks of attachment and respect which were paid to them in the name of the commonwealth, and for several years they did not endeavour to assume an authority which ostensibly was centred in [the magistrates alone, and which could not be exerted in secret, except by men whose long services and known abilities ensured attention. For seven years Florence enjoyed domestic peace; the Medici, divided between their studies and the tastes of youth, at one time entertained men the most distinguished in art and letters, at another amused the people with brilliant spectacles. But as they advanced to manhood, and took the administration into their own hands, their rule became more absolute, and their innovations on the constitution more obvious. They appointed a body of five electors, who named the magistracy without any reference to the people: they converted the *balia** into a permanent council, in whose hands they placed the legislative, the administrative, and judicial power; and by its means they got rid of their enemies without legal proceedings, imposed new taxes at pleasure, and diverted the revenue to the maintenance of their commercial credit and the support of their luxury. Unwilling that any should enjoy consideration, excepting as it was derived from his own influence and favour, Lorenzo excluded from office, and depressed to the utmost of his power, all those whose rivalry seemed most to be feared, but especially the Pazzi, one of the noblest and most powerful families

* Upon any emergency, real or pretended, it was usual for the magistrates to convene the citizens, and procure the appointment of a *balia*, or extraordinary council, which possessed the absolute power of a Roman dictator.

of the state. At this period it contained nine men of mature age, and of the first rank in the city: yet since the death of Piero, but one of its members had been admitted to the magistracy. This exclusion was the more offensive because one of them had married Bianca, the sister of the Medici. Giuliano, whose temper was less ambitious, as his talents were inferior to his brother's, expressed his dissatisfaction at this conduct, and said to his brother, that he feared they should lose what they had by grasping at too much. It was believed also that Lorenzo had interfered with the course of justice to deprive Giovanni de' Pazzi of a rich inheritance which was justly his due; and Francesco, one of the brothers-in-law of Bianca, a man of violent and haughty temper, withdrew from Florence, and established a bank at Rome.

Sixtus IV., the reigning Pope, nourished also an inveterate hatred against the Medici, and under his auspices a conspiracy was formed to murder them and place Florence under the power of the Pazzi, in which Francesco Pazzi and Salviati, Archbishop of Pisa, were the chief actors.

* "The design of the conspirators was to assassinate both the brothers, Lorenzo and Giuliano, at the same instant, for the murder of one would otherwise only have the effect of putting the other on his guard.† The Pope

* It would have been more agreeable to the plan of this book to translate from the original accounts of Machiavelli, or Politiano, who was an eye-witness of the conspiracy; but their accounts are long and minute, not to say tedious, and would require much condensation; and we gladly avail ourselves of the brief and spirited narrative of Mr. Perceval.

† "Conspiring against one prince," says Machiavelli, "is a doubtful and dangerous undertaking; but to conspire against two at the same time must be either downright folly or madness:" and he enforces his principle by the examples of the Pazzi and of Harmodius and Aristogiton. "Pelopidas," he adds, "had ten tyrants instead of two to deal with:" it would be very dangerous, however, for any man to build on the success of this conspiracy, which, indeed, was almost

therefore wrote to the Cardinal Riario, nephew of Count Girolamo, a youth of only eighteen years of age, whom he had just admitted into the sacred college, and who was then studying at the University of Pisa, to desire him to obey whatever directions he should receive from the Archbishop of Pisa ; and Salviati accordingly carried him to a seat of the Pazzi near Florence. The conspirators knew that the new Cardinal must be welcomed with public entertainments, at which they hoped that the Medici might be found present together, and despatched while unsuspecting of danger. Jacopo de' Pazzi gave a fête, to which both the brothers were accordingly invited : Lorenzo, however, alone came, for Giuliano was indisposed. But Lorenzo, as had been foreseen, made sumptuous preparations to receive the Cardinal at his villa at Fiesole ; and there the conspirators fully resolved to execute their purpose. The entertainment took place, but still Giuliano was absent ; and the Pazzi, thus again disappointed, and despairing of securing the presence of the younger Medici, at a second festival to be given by his brother, resolved to defer their enterprise no longer than the following Sunday, when the Cardinal was to be present at high mass at the cathedral of Florence ; an occasion at which it was thought that neither of the Medici could with decency absent himself. There it was determined that, in the midst of the most solemn offices of religion, the crime of assassination should be perpetrated ; that the elevation of the host, as the kneeling victims bowed their heads, should be the signal of murder ; and that at the moment of the sacrifice, the Archbishop Salviati and others should seize the palace of the signiory, while Jacopo de' Pazzi was to raise the city by the cry of liberty. Francesco de' Pazzi charged himself, together with Bernardo Bandini, a daring and devoted partisan of his house, with the assassination of Giuliano. Giovanni

miraculous, and is mentioned by all writers who speak of it, as not only a rare, but almost unexampled event.—*Political Discourses*, book iii. chap. 6.

Battista Montesecco, a condottiere in the papal service, had boldly engaged with his single hand to despatch Lorenzo, while he understood that the murder was to take place at a festival. But when Montesecco found that it was before the altar of God that it was intended he should shed the blood of a man whose hospitality he had enjoyed, his courage failed him. The soldier declared that he dared not add sacrilege to murder and perfidy ; and his office was committed to two ecclesiastics, who had not the same scruples.

“ When the appointed morning arrived, the Cardinal Riario and Lorenzo de’ Medici were already at the cathedral, the church was rapidly filling with people, and still Giuliano de’ Medici did not appear. The conspirators began to dread another disappointment, and Francesco de’ Pazzi and Bernardo Bandini left the cathedral to seek for him, and to persuade him that his absence would be insidiously remarked. Every feeling which revolts at murder and treachery is strengthened, when we learn the terms of familiarity on which these men had just been living with him whom they were hurrying to death. They passed their arms round his waist, as if to draw him in playful violence towards the church, but in reality to feel whether he had put on his cuirass, which he wore with habitual timidity under his garments. But Giuliano was indisposed ; he had discarded his armour ; and so unsuspecting was he at that hour of impending evil, that he even left at home the dagger which usually hung at his side. As he entered the church and approached the altar, the two conspirators kept close to him ; the two priestly assassins had also fixed themselves in the throng beside Lorenzo ; and when the host was raised, and every knee was bending in adoration, Bandini struck his dagger into the breast of Giuliano. The victim staggered and fell, and Francesco de’ Pazzi threw himself upon him, with such blind fury, that besides inflicting on him several blows with his dagger, the least a death, he grievously wounded himself in the thigh. At the same moment the two priests attacked Lorenzo. One of them struck at his

throat, but missed his aim ; and the blow, which grazed the intended victim's neck, merely startled him to his defence.* Rapidly throwing his cloak about his left arm for a shield, he drew his sword and courageously defended himself until his attendants came to his aid. The priests then lost courage and fled : but Bandini, his dagger reeking with the blood of Giuliano, now endeavoured to rush upon Lorenzo, and stabbed one of his train to the heart, who interposed to defend him. Lorenzo, however, was by this time surrounded by his friends, who hastily sought refuge with him in the sacristy, and closed its brazen doors. Meanwhile the whole church was filled with consternation ; and the first moment of surprise and alarm had no sooner passed, than the friends of the Medici collected from all quarters, and conveyed Lorenzo in safety to his palace.

“ During this scene in the cathedral, the Archbishop Salviati, with a strong band of conspirators, attempted, as had been concerted, to seize the palace of the signiory and the persons of the magistrates. After filling the outer apartments with his followers, the archbishop obtained by his rank an easy admission to the presence of the gonfaloniere and priors who were sitting. But in-

* Machiavelli has drawn a shrewd caution to conspirators from the failure of the attack upon Lorenzo. “ It is necessary, in undertakings of this kind, to make use of men that have been sufficiently hardened and tried, and to trust no others, how courageous soever they may be accounted : for no man can answer even for his own resolution, if he have not thoroughly proved it before ; for the confusion he must naturally be in at such a time may either make him drop the dagger out of his hand, or say something which may have the same effect. Lucilla, sister to Commodus, having spirited up Quintianus to kill her brother, he waited for him as he came to the amphitheatre, and stepping up towards him with a drawn dagger in his hand, told him ‘ the senate had sent him that :’ upon which he was immediately seized before he got near enough to stab him. Antonio de Volterra being fixed upon to kill Lorenzo de’ Medici, cried out, as he advanced to kill him, ‘ Ha ! traitor !’ which proved the preservation of Lorenzo, and the ruin of the conspiracy.”—*Political Discourses*, b. iii. 6.

stead of immediately attacking them he hesitated ; and his manner betrayed so much confusion, that the suspicion of the gonfaloniere being excited, he rushed from the hall and assembled the guards and servants of the palace. The doors were secured, and the conspirators were furiously assaulted by the magistrates and their attendants with such motley weapons and instruments as the furniture of the palace afforded. Dispersed and intimidated, they made but a feeble resistance, and were all either slaughtered on the spot, hurled from the windows, or made prisoners. Jacopo de' Pazzi, followed by a troop of soldiery, attempted to succour them, after an abortive effort to excite the citizens to revolt by crying liberty through the streets. But the magistrates held the palace until numerous citizens came to their aid, and Jacopo, seeing that the game was lost, fled into the country.

“ The fate of most of the conspirators was not long delayed. The Archbishop Salviati was hanged from a window of the public palace, even in his prelatical robes. Francesco de' Pazzi, who, exhausted by loss of blood from his self-inflicted wound, had been obliged to confine himself to his uncle's house, was dragged from his bed, and suspended from the same place of execution. Jacopo himself, being discovered and arrested in the country by the peasantry, was brought into the city a few days afterwards, and similarly executed, with another of his nephews, whose knowledge of the conspiracy was his only crime, for he had refused to engage in it : and the whole of the devoted family of the Pazzi were condemned to exile, except Guglielmo, the brother-in-law of Lorenzo. The priests who had attacked Lorenzo, the condottiere Montesecco, and above seventy inferior persons besides, suffered death ; and even Bernardo Bandini, though he escaped for a time to Constantinople, paid the forfeit of his crimes ; for Lorenzo had sufficient interest with Mahomet II. to cause him to be seized and sent to Florence for execution. The young Cardinal Riario, rather an instrument than an accomplice in the conspiracy, was with difficulty saved by Lorenzo from

being torn to pieces by the fury of the Florentine mob ; but his attendants were mercilessly butchered by them."

The conspiracy of the Pazzi strikingly displayed the absoluteness of the Medician dominion over the will and affections of the people of Florence. So far from shewing any disposition to join the Pazzi in revolt, the populace were filled with grief and fury at the murder of Giuliano, and at the peril in which Lorenzo had stood. They had flown to arms to defend the Medici : and they paraded Florence for whole days to commit every outrage upon the dead bodies of the conspirators which still defiled the streets. The cry of "Palle, Palle!" the armorial device of the Medici,* continually resounded through the city ; and the memory of the tragedy wherein Giuliano had fallen, was always associated in the public mind with a deepened and affectionate interest for the safety of Lorenzo, and with an attachment to his person which lasted to his death.

We might perhaps search history in vain to find two families, whose fortunes, whose dispositions, and even whose tastes were so faithfully reflected in each other, as those of Pisistratus and Cosmo de' Medici. If we consider the younger Medici as immediately succeeding to their grandfather (and the concession is not important, for in the interval no political changes occurred in Florence), the resemblance between their fortunes, so far as we have traced them, is perfect. The founders of either house, after similar reverses, established tyrannies in their native cities, and yet lived and died beloved and respected by their countrymen, and delivered their usurped sovereignty peaceably to their successors. These successors were in either case two brothers, who instead

* The family arms of the Medici were six golden balls (palle d'oro). They asserted that this bearing was derived from the impressions left on the shield of one of their ancestors by a gigantic Saracen, who wielded a mace with six iron globes hung from it. Their detractors said that they were the arms of an apothecary, from whom the family derived the name of Medici, and that the golden balls were nothing better than gilded pills.

of running the usual course of jealousy and discord, exercised their joint power for years in harmony, and were at length separated by conspiracies which succeeded against the one, only to render more despotic the sway of the other. With respect to personal character, the resemblance between Pisistratus and Cosmo de' Medici has been fully dwelt upon. That between the brothers their descendants is necessarily less completely made out, for we know very little of the political conduct of the two Athenians; but we may observe the same hereditary love of art and literature, the same absence of jealousy, and the same superiority of one brother over the other in the cultivation of learning. The resemblance of their histories, so far as we have traced that of the Medici, fails only in one respect: the death of Hipparchus was due to his own intemperance, the murder of Giuliano de' Medici to the arbitrary measures of his brother.



CHAPTER VI.



Invasion of Scythia by Darius—Destruction of Crassus and his army by the Parthians—Retreat of Antony—Retreat and death of Julian—Retreat from Moscow.

DARIUS, son of Hystaspes, having gained possession of the vast empire which had been established by Cyrus, devoted his attention to the regulation of its internal policy : a task which we are led to believe he exercised with moderation and judgment. But the Persians were a warlike nation, less advanced in civilization than their sovereign ; hence his care of the finances of the empire degraded him in their eyes, and comparing his character with that of their former princes, while they called Cyrus the father, and Cambyses the master, they denominated Darius the broker of the empire. It was probably under the knowledge of these feelings, that his wife,

Atossa, daughter of Cyrus, thus addressed him :* "O king, though possessed of such ample means, thou sittest still, and gainest increase for the Persians neither of subjects nor power. But it befits a young man who is the master of vast resources, to manifest his worth in the performance of some mighty act, that the Persians may fully know they have a man for their king. Now, therefore, it profiteth thee twofold to do thus, both that the Persians may understand there is a man at their head, and also that they may be harassed by war, and for lack of leisure may not conspire against you. And now thou mightest distinguish thyself during thy youth, for the spirit groweth with the growing body; but it ageth also with the aging body, and is blunted towards all action." Darius answered, "All these things which thou hast suggested, I have resolved to perform, for I mean to build a bridge from this mainland to the other, to march against the Scythians, and within a little while all these things shall be accomplished." Atossa replied, "Do not go first against the Scythians, for they will be at your disposal at any time; but for my sake lead an army against Greece. For I have heard reports of the Grecian women, and wish much to have female slaves of Lacedæmon, and Argos, and Corinth, and Athens."

Some time elapsed before Darius was at leisure to pursue his schemes of conquest; but after the Babylonian rebellion was quelled, when the prosperity of Asia was at its height, he determined to invade the Scythians under pretence of revenging the desolating incursion of their ancestors into Media, a century before. With this view he sent orders throughout his dominions, to some nations

* Herod. iii. 134.—The style of Herodotus is highly dramatic, and we by no means intend to say that such a conversation took place, though there are circumstances attendant on the narrative which may satisfactorily answer the natural question, how came it to be reported and known? But whether we believe it to be genuine or not, it embodies a plausible reason for an expedition which seems at variance with the character of Darius, and probably contains the grounds on which Herodotus accounted for it.

that they should prepare infantry, others a fleet, others construct a bridge across the Thracian Bosphorus, in which a Grecian artist, Mandrocles of Samos, was employed. The fleet, which was contributed by the Asiatic Greeks, he sent on to the Ister, or Danube, with orders to construct a bridge there also, which was done, two days' sail from the mouth of the river; the land forces* he himself conducted through Thrace. Darius, though a wise prince, was not exempt from that inordinate spirit of boasting which has beset the eastern sovereigns in all ages. At the source of the river Tearus, where are hot and cold medicinal springs issuing from the same rock, he caused a column to be set up, with this inscription:—"The fountains of Tearus pour forth the best and fairest water of all rivers, and thither, on his march against the Scythians, came the best and fairest of all men, Darius, son of Hystaspes, King of the Persians, and of all the continent." Another instance of this spirit occurs, when he ordered a pile of stones to be raised at the river Artiscus, as a monument of the magnitude of his army, each individual being ordered to contribute one stone to the heap. Passing onward,† he crossed the Ister, and entered Scythia, leaving the Ionians behind to protect his return, but with permission to depart home, unless he should reap-

* They are said by Herodotus to have consisted of 700,000 men, horse and foot; the fleet of 600 ships.

† Some curious particulars remain concerning the Getæ, whom he encountered on his march. They believed in the immortality of the soul, as taught them by their lawgiver Zalmoxis, or as the name is otherwise read, Zamolxis; and in a future state of happiness. Every fifth year they sent a messenger to inform Zalmoxis, whom they had deified, of their wants, in this manner. Choosing a man by lot, they first give him full instructions as to the purport of his embassy, and then certain men, taking him by the hands and feet, toss him in the air, others hold three spears placed so that he might fall upon them. If he die immediately, Zalmoxis is thought to be favourably disposed; if not, they call the messenger a scoundrel, and proceed to make trial of somebody else.

pear within sixty days. The Scythians did not attempt open resistance; they blocked up the wells and springs, and destroyed the forage throughout the country; and taking advantage of their own wandering habits, harassed the Persians by leading them a fruitless chase in pursuit of an enemy who seemed always within reach, and yet could never be overtaken. After wandering over a vast extent of desert, Darius began to weary of so unprofitable an occupation, and indulging a hope, perhaps, that the enemy would be complaisant enough to change their tactics for his own convenience, sent the following message to Idanthysus, the Scythian king: "O wonderful man, why wilt thou still fly, having the choice of these two things? If thou esteemest thyself capable to stand up against me, abide, and do battle; but if thou acknowledgest thyself to be the weaker, even then desist from flight, and come to my presence, bringing earth and water, gifts due to your master." The proposal was conceived in the spirit of our own chivalrous ancestors, and from them might have met with a prompt acquiescence; but Idanthysus was not to be piqued into an act of imprudence, and in truth more wisdom is visible in his reply than in the request which led to it. "O Persian, this is my way: hitherto I have never fled for fear of any man, neither do I now fly before thee, nor act otherwise than I am wont in peace. And I will tell thee wherefore I decline a battle. We have neither towns nor tilled land, in defence of which we are compelled to fight; but if it be of importance to thee to bring us to battle, lo, there are the tombs of our ancestors; find them out, and endeavour to destroy them, and thou shalt then know whether we will fight for our sepulchres, or whether we will not. But, until this, unless we ourselves see reason, we will not fight. So much for fighting. For masters, we own none, save Jupiter, my ancestor, and Vesta, Queen of the Scythians. And instead of sending earth and water, I will send you such a present as befits the occasion; but as for calling thyself our master, I say, go hang."* Now the Scythians were very angry at the bare

* The reader may compare the following passage of

mention of servitude, and sent one division to commune with the Ionians who guarded the bridge, while the rest of them, instead of still retreating before the Persians, began to harass them by desultory attacks, in which the Scythians had always the advantage over the Persian cavalry; but when these fell back upon the infantry, they were secure from further molestation. These attacks were made continually by night and day. And now, says Herodotus, I will mention a very strange thing, that was of great service to the Persians against these assaults. Scythia produces neither ass nor mule, neither are there any such throughout the country, by reason of the cold. The noise of the asses therefore disordered the Scythian cavalry, and very often in a charge, when the horses heard them bray, they would start and fly aside in terror, pricking up their ears, for that they had never seen the like, nor heard such a sound. At length, when the country was exhausted, and it was known that Darius was in want, the Scythian princes sent a herald, bearing a present of a mouse, a bird, a frog, and five arrows. The Persians asked what was the meaning of this offering;

Froissart, chap. xviii. The English army were in pursuit of the Scots, then employed in ravaging Northumberland under the Earl of Douglas, who was strongly posted upon a hill side, with a deep and rocky river in his front. "And there were harauldis of armes sent to the Sottis gyvyng them knowledge if that they would come and passe the ryver to fight with them in the playne felde, they wolde draw backe fro the ryver, and gyve theym sufficient place to arraynge theyr batelles, eyther the same day, or els the next, as they wolde chuse them selfe, or els to lette them do lyke wyse, and they wolde come over to them. And whan the Scottis harde this they toke counsell among theymselfe: and anon they answered the harauldis, how they wolde do nother the one nor the other, and said, syrs, your kyng and his lordis se well how we be here in this realme, and have burnt and wasted the countrey as we have passed through, and if they be displeased therewith, lette them amend it whan they wyll, for here we wyll abide, as long as it shall please us." Challenges of this sort were often given in the days of chivalry, and not unfrequently accepted.

but he replied, that his orders were merely to deliver it and depart immediately; and bade them, if they were skilled in such things, discover what these gifts should signify. Now Darius thought that the Scythians surrendered to him themselves, their land, and waters, arguing thus: that a mouse dwells in the earth, living on the same food as man, and a frog in the water, and that a bird is likeliest to a horse, and the arrows meant that they delivered up to him their power. But Gobryas conjectured that it meant this: "Unless, O Persians, you should become birds and soar into the skies, or mice and sink beneath the earth, or frogs and leap into the water, never shall ye return home, being stricken by these arrows." Now that division of Scythians which had been sent to confer with the Ionians, when they arrived at the bridge, said, "Ye men of Ionia, we bring you liberty, if you will hearken to us. For we hear that Darius bade you depart home, after you had watched the bridge sixty days, if he should not return within that time: now therefore by so doing you will be free from blame, both towards him and towards us." And when the Ionians had promised to do so, the Scythians returned in all haste.

Idanthyrus, after sending the above alarming intimation, changed his tactics, and offered battle to Darius. It chanced that while the hostile armies were drawn up, waiting for the signal to engage, a hare jumped up from among the Scythians, who broke their ranks and joined unanimously in the chase. Darius inquired from what cause such a tumult arose, and hearing that the enemy were engaged in hunting the hare, he said to his confidential advisers, "These men hold us in great contempt; and now methinks Gobryas has spoken rightly concerning the Scythian presents. Since, therefore, things are so, we need good advice, how may we retreat in safety." Gobryas made answer, "O king, I was pretty well acquainted by report with the poverty of these men, and now I am the more convinced of it, seeing how they make sport of us. Therefore it seems best to me, to light our fires as usual, so soon as the night comes on, and then shackling the asses, and leav-

ing them behind, with such as are least able to bear fatigue, to depart before the Scythians can reach the Danube to destroy the bridge, and before such a plan, which might be our ruin, can be resolved upon by the Ionians." This advice gave Gobryas: and when it was night, Darius left in the camp all those who were wearied, and of whose death least account was made, together with the asses, under pretence that he would himself attack the enemy with the flower of the army, and that the others should remain to protect the camp. So the Scythians seeing the fires, and hearing the asses as usual, suspected nothing: but the next morning, when the deserted Persians came and made submission, they set out with all speed, and arrived at the Danube before Darius, who had wandered from the direct way. Then they said, "Ye men of Ionia, ye act unjustly in staying here after the days that were numbered have passed away. Hitherto you have remained through fear; but now, destroy the bridge, and depart with all haste, rejoicing in your freedom, and acknowledging your obligation to the gods and the Scythians. And him that was heretofore your master we will so handle, that from henceforth he shall wage war upon no man." Therefore the Ionians took counsel; and Miltiades the Athenian (the same who afterwards commanded at Marathon) that was their leader, and ruler over the Thracian Chersonese, was minded to take the counsel of the Scythians, and thus set free Ionia. But Histiaeus, of Miletus, said, on the contrary, that now each of them that were in council was ruler over his own city through the influence of Darius, which being destroyed, neither he himself nor any of them would retain his sovereignty, for every city would choose the government of the many rather than of one. Those, therefore, that had adopted Miltiades' opinion, now came over to that of Histiaeus, and it was resolved to break up the Scythian end of the bridge for the distance of a bowshot, that they might appear to comply with what had been requested, and thus be secured from all attempts to destroy it. Histiaeus therefore replied, "O Scythians, you bring good advice, and urge it at a

reasonable moment, and as your proposition guides us to our advantage, even so we are inclined to follow it carefully. For, as you see, we are breaking up the bridge, and we will manifest all zeal, desiring to be free. But while we are thus employed, it is fit time for you to go in search of the Persians, and to exact the vengeance that is due both to us and to you." So the Scythians, a second time giving credit to the Ionians for speaking the truth, returned in quest of the Persians, but missed their track; so that the latter arrived at the passage without interruption, but coming there by night, and finding the bridge broken, they were thrown into much alarm lest the Ionians should have deserted them. There was in Darius's train an Egyptian, whose voice was louder than that of any known man. Darius bade him stand on the bank, and call Histieus the Milesian, who heard him at the first shout, and reconstructed the bridge, so that the army passed over in safety. And the Scythians, judging of the Ionians from these transactions, say, on the one hand, that they are the basest and most unworthy of all freemen; and on the other, reckoning them as slaves, that of all such they best love their masters, and are least disposed to run away.*

If Darius's real object was to extend his empire, or take revenge upon the Scythians, his failure was complete and humiliating; if undertaken on the ground suggested by Atossa as a measure of policy, a safety-valve to guard against the explosion of Persian turbulence, his purpose probably was fully answered in the loss and suffering which the army underwent. But whatever were his motives, he escaped more easily and creditably than most generals who have presumed to contest the possession of their deserts with the numerous and active cavalry of Tartary and Persia. Troops of the highest character, irresistible where their proper arms and discipline can be made available, have often sunk under the fatigue and hardships of warfare against a new enemy, under a new sky, and have been conquered by circumstances, almost

* Herod. lib. iv. c. 83—142.

without the use of the sword. By varying the climate and natural features of the earth—by giving man a frame which, notwithstanding the wonderful flexibility which adapts it equally for the snows of Greenland and the vertical splendour of the torrid zone, is ill calculated for violent and sudden changes, Providence has set bounds in some degree to the march of ambition, and often turned the triumph of the conqueror into mourning. We shall devote the rest of this chapter to relating a few of the most striking disasters which have occurred from the neglect of these considerations, and the rash invasion of regions where the elements, the face of the country, or the manners of its inhabitants have presented invincible obstacles to the success of the attacking army.

The unfortunate expedition of Crassus against the Parthians furnishes us with a second testimony to the valour of the Scythian hordes. Expelled or emigrating from Scythia Proper, that tribe long dwelt to the eastward of the Caspian Sea, and successively obeyed the Mede, the Persian, and the Macedonian dynasties, until at length they shook off the yoke of the last, and planted a new race upon the throne of Cyrus. The motives of avarice and ambition which led Crassus to the fatal enterprise in which he fell, are well known. From the first he was marked out for destruction by superstitious terrors: as he quitted Rome he was solemnly devoted by a tribune to the infernal gods; ill-omened prodigies attended the passage of the Euphrates, and even the exhortations of the general were so equivocally worded, that, instead of raising, they damped the courage of his soldiers. Instead of penetrating through the friendly country of Armenia, where the mountains would have protected him from the enemy's cavalry, and the king had promised not only a large reinforcement, but to provide food for the consumption of the Romans, Crassus was induced, by the treachery of a pretended friend, to plunge into the deserts of Mesopotamia, the region of all others best adapted to the operations of his enemies. We shall not detain the reader with the particulars of his advance, which for some

time was unopposed ; but when he was fairly involved in that inhospitable region, the enemy was not long in making his appearance.

“ The enemies seemed not to the Romans at the first to be so great a number, neither so bravely armed as they thought they had been. For concerning their great number, Surenas* had of purpose hid them with certain troops he sent before ; and to hide their bright armour he had cast cloaks and beasts’ skins over them ; but when both the armies approached near the one to the other, and that the sign to give charge was lift up in the air, first they filled the field with a dreadful noise to hear ; for the Parthians do not encourage their men to fight with the sound of a horn, neither with trumpets, but with great kettle-drums, hollow within, and about them they hang little bells and copper rings, and with them they all make a noise everywhere together ; and it is like a dead sound mingled as it were with the braying or bellowing of a wild beast, and a fearful noise as if it thundered, knowing that hearing is one of the senses that soonest moveth the heart and spirit of any man, and maketh him soonest beside himself. The Romans being put in fear with this dead sound, the Parthians straight threw the clothes and coverings from them that hid their armour, and then showed their bright helmets and cuirasses of Margian tempered steel, that glared like fire, and their horses barbed with steel and copper. And Surenas also, general of the Parthians, who was a goodly personage and valiant as any other in all his host, though for his beauty somewhat effeminate, showed small likelihood of such courage : for he painted his face and wore his hair after the fashion of the Medes, when the other Parthians drew their hair back from the forehead in the Scythian manner to look more terrible. The Parthians at the

* This seems to be not a name, but a title of office, belonging to the commander-in-chief of the Parthian army, as the appellation Brennus is supposed to have denoted a similar office among the Gauls.

first thought to have set upon the Romans with their pikes, to see if they could break their first ranks. But when they drew near, and saw the depth of their battell standing close together, firmly keeping their ranks, then they gave back, making as though they fled, and dispersed themselves; and yet, before they were aware, environed them on every side; whereupon Crassus commanded his shot and light-armed men to assail them; the which they did: but they went not far, they were so beaten in by arrows, and driven to retire to their force of the armed men. And this was the first beginning that both feared and troubled the Romans when they saw the vehemency and great force of the enemy's shot, which brake their armours, and ran through everything it hit, were it never so hard or soft. The Parthians, thus still drawing back, shot altogether on every side at adventure: for the battell of the Romans stood so neare together, as, if they would, they could not miss the killing of some. These bowmen drew a great strength, and had much bent bowes, which sent the arrows from them with a wonderful force.* The Romans by means of

* This description will bring to the reader's recollection the skill of our own ancestors in the use of this destructive weapon, which mainly contributed to many of their most celebrated victories. The following extract relates to the battle of Crecy. "Ther were of the genowayes (a) cros-bowes about a fiftene thousand, but they were so wery of goying a fote that day, a six leages, armed with their cros-bowes, that they sayde to their constables, we be nat well ordred to fyght this day, for we be nat in the case to do any grete dede of arms, we have more nede of rest:—these wordes came to the erle of Alencon, who sayd, a man is well at ease to be charged with such a sort of raskalles, to be faynt, and fayle now at most nede. . . . When the genowayes were assembled toguyder, and beganne to approche, they made a grete leape, and crye, to abasshe thenglysshemen, but they stode styll, and styredde nat for all that: than the genowayes agayne the second tyme made another leape, and a fell crye, and stepped forward a lyttell,

(a) Genoese.

these bowes were in hard state, for if they kept their ranks they were grievously wounded : again, if they left them, and sought to run upon the Parthians to fight at hand with them, they suffered none the less, and were

and then glysshemmen renewed nat one fote : thirdly agayne they leapt, and cryed, and went forth tyll they came within shotte ; than they shotte feersly with their crosbowes ; than then glysshe archers stept forth one pase, and lette fly their arowes so holly and so thycke, that it seemed snow : when the genowayes felte the arowes persynge through heedes, armes, and brestes, many of them cast downe their crosbowes, and dyde cut their strings, and retourned dyscomfited. When the French kynge sawe them flye away, he sayd, slee these raskalles, for they shall let and trouble us without reason : than ye shulde have seen the men at armes dasshe in amonge them, and kyllled a grete nombre of them : and ever styll the englysshemmen shot whereas they saw thickest preace ; the sharp arowes ranne into the men of armes, and into their horses, and many fell, horse and men, amonge the genowayes : and whan they were downe, they coulede nat relyve again, the preace was so thicke that one overthrewe another."—*Froissart*, chap. 130.

So at the battle of Homildoun, Percy wished to charge the Scots, who were drawn up upon a hill, but the Earl of March retained him, and bid him open their ranks by archery. "Then the English archers marching against the Scots, *stitched them together* with arrows, and made them bristle like a hedgehog, as it were with thorns and prickles ; the hands and arms of the Scots they nailed to their own lances, so that with that sharp shower of arrows some they overthrew, others they wounded, and very many they slew. Upon which the valiant Sir John Swinton exclaimed, as with the voice of a herald, 'My noble fellow-soldiers, what has bewitched you, that you give not way to your wonted gallantry : that you rush not to the mellay, hand to hand, nor pluck up heart like men, to attack those who would slaughter you with arrows, like hinds in a park. Let such as will go down with me, and in God's name we will break into the enemy and so either come off with life, or else fall knightly with honour.'"—(*Fordun, Scotiechr.* lib. xv. cap. 14.) One manuscript adds, "I have never heard nor read that the English in fair field beat an equal number of Scots

no nearer to effecting anything. For the Parthians, in retreating, yet cease not from their shot, which no nation but the Scythians could better do than they. And it is an excellent contrivance that they do fight in their flight, and thereby shun the shame of flying. The Romans still defended themselves, and held it out so long as they had any hope that the Parthians would leave fighting when they had spent their arrowes, or would joyne battel with them. But after they understood that there were a great number of camels laden with quivers full of arrowes, where the first that had bestowed their arrowes fetched about to take new quivers; then Crassus, seeing no end to their shot, began to faint, and sent to Publius his son, willing him to charge upon the enemies before they were compassed in on every side. For it was on Publius' side that one of the wings of the enemies battell was nearest unto them, and where they rode up and down to compass them behind. Whereupon Crassus' sonne, taking thirteene hundred horsemen with him (of the which a thousand were of the men of armes whom Julius Cæsar sent) and five hundred shot, with eight ensignes of footmen having targets, wheeling about, led them unto the charge. But they seeing him coming, turned straight their horses and fled, either because of the steadiness of his array, or else of purpose to beguile this young Crassus, inticing him thereby as far from his father as they could. Publius Crassus seeing them flie, cryed out, 'These men will not abide with us;' and so spurred on for life after them. Now the horsemen of the Romans being trained out thus to the chase, the footmen also were not inferior in hope, joy, or courage. For they thought all had been won, and that there was no more to do but to follow the chase: till they were gone far from the army, and then they by charge of lance, but very often by the thunder-shower (*fulminatione*) of their arrowes. Let the latter therefore beware of waiting the flight of archery, but hasten to close combat, even as Sir John Swinton then did." This is the story which Sir Walter Scott has worked up into his poem of Halidon Hill

found the deceit. For the horsemen that fled before them suddenly turned again, and a number of others besides came, and set upon them. Whereupon they stayed, thinking that the enemies, perceiving they were so few, would come and fight with them hand to hand. Howbeit the Parthians drew up again them their men at armes, and made their other horsemen wheele round about them, keeping no order at all : who gallopping up and down the plain, whirled up the sand-hills from the bottom with their horses' feet, which raised such a wonderful dust, that the Romans could scarce see or speak to one another. For they being shut up into a little roome, and standing close one to another, were sore wounded with the Parthian arrowes, and died of a cruell lingering death, crying out for anguish and paine they felt ; and being still harassed by the shot thereof, they died of their wounds, or striving by force to pluck out the forked arrow-heads that had pierced farre into their bodies through their veines and sinewes, thereby they opened their wounds wider, and so injured themselves the more. Many of them died thus, and such as died not were not able to defend themselves. Then when Publius Crassus prayed and besought them to charge the men at armes with the barded horse, they shewed him theirs hands fast nailed to the targets with arrowes, and their feet likewise shot through and nailed to the ground ; so as they could neither flie, nor yet defend themselves. Thereupon himself encouraging his horsemen, went and gave charge, and did valiantly set upon the enemies, but it was with too great disadvantages, both for offence and also for defence. For himself and his men, with weak and light staves, brake upon them that were armed with cuirasses of steele, or stiff leather jackes. And the Parthians, in contrary manner, with mighty strong pikes gave charge upon these Gaules, which were either unarmed, or else but lightly armed. Yet those were they in whom Crassus most trusted, and with them did he wonderfull feates of war. For they seized hold of the Parthians' pikes and took them about the middles and threw them off their horse, being scarce able to stir for

the weight of their harnesses;* and there were divers of them also that lighting from their horse crept under their enemies' horse bellies, and thrust their swords into them, which flinging and bounding in the aire for very paine, trampled confusedly both upon their masters and their enemies, and in the end fell dead among them. Moreover extream heat and thirst did marvellously comber the Gauls, who were used to abide neither of both: and the most part of their horses were slain, charging with all their power upon the Parthian pikes.

“At the length, they were driven to retire towards their footmen, and Publius Crassus among them, who was very ill by reason of the wounds he had received. And seeing a sand-hill by chance not farre from them, they went thither, and setting their horses in the midst of it, compassed it in round with their targets, thinking by this means to cover and defend themselves the better from the barbarous people: howbeit, they found it contrary. For the country being plain, they in the foremost ranks did somewhat cover them behind, but they that were behind standing higher than they that stood foremost (by reason of the nature of the hill that was highest in the midst) could by no means save themselves, but were all hurt alike, as well the one as the other, bewailing their inglorious and unavailing end. At that present time there were two Grecians about Publius Crassus, Hieronymus and Nicomachus, who dwelt in those quarters, in the city of Carrhæ: they both counselled Publius Crassus to steale away with them, and flie to a city called Ischnæ, that was not farre from thence, and took the Romans' part. But Publius answered them, that there was no death so cruel as could make him forsake those that died for his sake.† When he had so

* In European warfare, overthrown knights were often unable to rise from the incumbrance of their ponderous defences, and not very unfrequently suffocated by dust, heat, and want of air.

† Examples of a similar high sense of honour might be multiplied from the history of chivalry. Once during his crusade Richard Cœur-de-Lion saw a party of Templars sur-

said, wishing them to save themselves, he embraced them, and took his leave of them: and being very sore hurt with the shot of an arrow through one of his hands, commanded his shield-bearer to thrust him through with a sword, and so turned his side to him for the purpose. And most part of the gentlemen that were of that company, slew themselves with their own hands. And for those that were left alive, the Parthians got up the sand-hill, and fighting with them thrust them through with their speares and pikes, and took but five hundred prisoners. After that, they struck off Publius Crassus' head, and thereupon returned straight to set upon his father, Crassus, who was then in this state.

"Crassus, the father, after he had willed his son to charge the enemies, and that one brought him word he had broken them, and pursued the chase; and perceiving also that they that remained in their great battell, did not presse upon him so neare as they did before, because that a great number of them were gone after the

rounded and overmatched by Saracens, and being unarmed, sent some of his barons to support the Christians until he himself should be ready for combat. "Meanwhile an overpowering force of the enemy came up, and when he arrived at the field, the danger appeared so imminent, that he was entreated not to hazard his own person in the unequal contest. The king replied, his colour changing with his boiling blood, 'Sith I have sent dear comrades to battle with a promise of following to assist them, if, as I have engaged, I do not defend them with all my strength, but being absent, and wanting, which Heaven forbid, they should meet death, I will never again usurp the name of king.' So with no more words, rushing into the midst of the Turks like a thunderbolt, he pierced through, and cut them down and dispersed them, and then with many prisoners and his friends delivered, he returned to the camp."—(*Broad Stone of Honour*, book iv. p. 174.)—So also the Marquis de Villena, a distinguished warrior of the court of Ferdinand of Arragon, being asked by Queen Isabella why he had exposed his own life to save a trusty servant nearly overpowered by odds, replied, "Should I not peril one life to serve him, who would have adventured three, had he possessed them, for me?"

other; he then took courage, and keeping his men close, retired with them the best he could by a hill's side, looking ever that his sonne would not be long before that he returned from the chase. But Publius seeing himselfe in danger, had sent divers messengers to his father, to advertise him of his distresse, whom the Parthians intercepted, and slew by the way; and the last messengers he sent escaping very hardly, brought Crassus newes that his sonne was but cast away, if he did not presently aid him, and that with a great power. But in the meane time the enemies were returned from his son's overthrow with a more dreadfull noise, and cry of victory than ever before, and thereupon their deadly sounding drummes filled the air with their wonderful noise. The Romans then looked straight for a hot alarme; but the Parthians that brought Publius Crassus' head upon the point of a lance, coming neere to the Romans, showed them his head, and asked them, in derision, if they knew what house he was of, and who were his parents: for it is not likely, said they, that so noble and valiant a young man should be the son of so cowardly a father as Crassus. This sight killed the Roman hearts more than any other danger throughout all the battell. For it did not set their hearts on fire, as it should have done, with anger and desire of revenge, but far otherwise, made them quake for fear. Yet Crassus selfe shewed more glorious in this misfortune than in all the warre beside. For riding by every band, he cried out aloud, 'The grief and sorrowe of this losse, my fellowes, is no man's but mine, mine onely: but the mighty fortune and honour of Rome remaineth still unvincible, so long as you are yet living. Now, if you pity my losse of so noble and valiant a son, my good soldiers, shew this in fury against the enemy; make them dearly buy the joy they have gotten; be revenged of their cruelty, and let not my misfortune fear you. For why! aspiring minds sometime must needs sustaine losse.'

"Crassus, using these persuasions to encourage his soldiers for resolution, found that all his words wrought none effect; but contrarily, after he had commanded

them to give the shout of battell, he plainly saw that their heartes were done, for that their shout rose but faint, and not all alike. The Parthians on the other side, their shout was greate, and lustily they rang it out. Now when they came to joyne, the Parthians' horsemen wheeling all round the Romans, still galled them with their archery, while their men at armes, giving charge upon the front of the Romans' battell, with their great lances compelled them to draw into a narrow roome, a few excepted that valiantly and in desperate manner ran in among them, as men desiring, though they could do the enemy but little harm, rather to die quickly by a mortal wound. So were they soone dispatcht, with the great lances that ranne them through, head, wood and all, with such a force as oftentimes they ranne through two at once. Thus when they had fought the whole day, night drew on, and made them retire, saying that they would give Crassus that night's respite, to lament and bewaile his sonne's death: unlesse that otherwise he, wisely looking about him, thought it better for his safety to come and offer himself to King Arsaces' mercy, than to tarry to be brought to him by force. So the Parthians camping hard by the Romans, were in very good hope to overthrow them the next morning."

In this miserable condition the only hope of safety lay in the immediate prosecution of their retreat under cover of the night; and this measure was accompanied by the melancholy necessity of abandoning their wounded men to the mercy of an implacable enemy. Crassus, overcome with sorrow, laid himself down with his head covered, and would see no man. His chief officers, therefore, among whom was Cassius, afterwards celebrated as one of the murderers of Cæsar, held a council of war, and resolved upon immediate departure; a step which held out the greater prospect of security, as the Parthians never attacked by night, nor indeed took up their quarters in near neighbourhood even to the weakest enemy, for they used no sort of fortification or defence, and if attacked in the dark their cavalry was difficult to

be equipped and their skill in archery useless.* Those of the Romans who were capable of marching, retreated without further loss to the town of Carrhæ; but the Parthians slew all that were left, to the number of 4000 and upwards. Surena, lest the fugitives should outstrip him by immediate flight, had recourse to a fraudulent negotiation, which was insultingly broken off as soon as his end was answered, and his troops collected before the city. Escape, therefore, was now more difficult than ever, and Crassus' evil fortune, or want of penetration, led him again to place confidence in a traitor, who informed the enemy of the period fixed for departure, and completed his villainy by entangling the army in a morass. Cassius, mistrusting this man, returned to Carrhæ. His guides advised him to remain there until the moon were out of the sign of Scorpio; but he answered, "I fear the sign of Sagittarius (*the archer*) more," and, departing immediately, escaped to Assyria with 500 horsemen. Crassus, and the main body of the army, after long struggling, had overcome the difficulties in which they were involved, and were within a few furlongs of the hills, when they were overtaken and attacked by the Parthians.

"Then compassing Crassus in the midst of them, covering him round with their targets, they spake nobly, that never an arrow of the Parthians should touch the body of their general, before they were slain, one after another, and that they had fought it out to the last man in his defence. Hereupon Surena, perceiving the Parthians were not so courageous as they were wont to be, and that if night came upon them, and that the Romans

* So Xenophon says, in the *Anabasis*, that the Persians never encamped less than 60 stadia (6 or 7 miles) from the Greeks. "The Persian army is a bad thing by night. For their horses are tethered, and shackled also for the most part, that they may not run away if they get loose: and if there be any disturbance, the Persian has to saddle and bridle his horse, and mount him loaded with his armour; which is all difficult by night, especially in any tumult. For these reasons they encamped away from the Grecians."

did once recover the high mountains, they could never possibly be met withall againe: he thought cunningly to beguile Crassus once more by this device. He let certain prisoners go of purpose, before whom he made his men give out this speech, that the King of Parthia would have no more mortal war with the Romans; but far otherwise; he rather desired their friendship, by shewing them some notable favour, as to use Crassus very courteously. And to give colour to this bruit, he called his men from fight, and going himself in person towards Crassus with the chiefest of the nobility of his hoast, in quiet manner, his bow unbent, he held out his right hand, and called Crassus to talk with him of peace, and said unto him, 'Though the Romans had felt the force and power of their king, it was against his will; howbeit that now he was very willing and desirous to make them taste of his mercy, and was contented to make peace with them, and to let them go where they would.' All the Romans besides Crassus, were glad of Surena's words. But Crassus, that had been deceived before by their crafty fetches and devices; considering also no cause apparent to make them change thus suddenly, would not hearken to it, but first consulted with his friends. Howbeit the soldiers, they cried out on him to go, and fell at words with him, saying that he would fain set them to fight with an enemy, with whom he had not the heart to talk unarmed. Crassus tried entreaty first, saying that if they would but persevere for the remainder of the day, they might depart at night through the mountaines and straight passages, where their enemies would not follow them: and pointing them the way with his finger, he prayed them not to be faint-hearted, nor to despair of their safety, seeing they were so neare it. But in the end, Crassus perceiving that they fell to mutiny, and, beating of their harnesse, did threaten him if he went not, fearing there they would do him some villainy, went towards the enemy, and coming backe a little, said only these words: 'O Octavius, and you, Petronius, with all you Roman gentlemen that have charge in this army, you all see

now how I against my will am enforced to go to the place I would not, and can witnesse with me how I am driven with shame and force ; yet I pray you, if your fortunes be to escape this danger, that ye will report wheresoever you come, that Crassus was slaine, not delivered up by his own soldiers into the hands of the barbarous people, but deceived by the fraud and subtilty of his enemies.'

"Octavius would not tarry behind on the hill, but went down with Crassus : but Crassus sent away his sergeants that followed him. The first that came from the Parthians unto Crassus were two mongrell Grecians, who, dismounting from their horse, saluted him, 'and prayed him to send some of his men before, and Surena would shew them, that both himself and his train came unarmed towards him. Crassus thereto made him answer, that if he had made any account of his life, he would not have put himself into their hands. Notwithstanding he sent two brethren before, called the Roscii, to know what number of men, and to what end they met so many together. These two brethren came no sooner to Surena but they were staid, and himselfe in the mean time kept on his way a horse-backe, with the noblest men of his army. Now when Surena came neare to Crassus, 'Why, how now,' quoth he, 'what meaneth this? a consul and lieutenant-generall of Rome on foot, and we on horse-back!' Therewithal he straight commanded one of his men to bring him a horse. Crassus answered Surena again : ' In that neither of them offended, each coming to the meeting according to the custom of his country.' Surena replied, 'As for the treaty of peace, that was already agreed upon between the king Hyrodes and the Romans : howbeit that they were to go to the river and there to set down the articles in writing ; for you Romans,' said he, 'do not greatly remember the capitulations you have agreed upon.' With those words, he gave him his right hand. As Crassus was sending for a horse ; You shall not need, saith Surena, for, look, the king doth present you with this. And straight one

was brought him, with a golden bridle ; upon which his grooms mounted Crassus immediately, and following him behind, lashed his horse to make him run the swifter. Octavius, seeing that, first laid hand on the bridle, then Petronius ; and after them, all the rest of the Romans also gathered about Crassus to stay the horse, and to take him from them by force, that pressed him on of either side. So they thrust one at another at the first very angrily, and at the last fell to blowes. Then Octavius drew out his sword, and slew one of the barbarous noblemen's horsekeepers ; and another came behind him, and slew Octavius, and on the other side came Pomaxæthres, one of the Parthians, and slew Crassus. As for them that were there, some of them were slain in the field fighting for Crassus, and others saved themselves by flying to the hill. The Parthians followed them, and told them that Crassus had paid the paine he deserved, and for the rest, that Surena bad them come down with safety. Then some of them yielded to their enemies ; and others dispersed themselves when night came, and of them very few escaped with life. Others being followed and pursued by the natives, were all put to the sword. So as it is thought there were slain in this overthrow above twenty thousand men, and ten thousand taken prisoners."*

Not many years subsequent to this signal overthrow the Roman eagle again swooped upon Assyria, and was again compelled to wing back its disastrous flight to a more congenial soil and climate. Encouraged by the Syrian victories of his lieutenant Ventidius (the only Roman down to the time of Trajan who ever celebrated a triumph over the Parthians), and desirous to efface the stain upon the empire's honour by extorting the

* North's Plutarch ; Life of Crassus. This statement of numbers, though large, is not incredible, since the army originally consisted of seven legions, besides 4000 horse and as many light-armed infantry ; and few appear to have effected their escape.

restoration of the captured standards and prisoners; Antony led into Media an army of 100,000 men. But his enterprise, like those of his predecessors, proved barren alike of profit or renown: for if he could boast that the enemy, far from gaining any advantage over his veteran troops, were uniformly baffled and repulsed during a long and dangerous retreat, yet that retreat proved as calamitous as the advance had been useless; and the hardships of the desert were scarce less fatal to him than the Parthian arrows to Crassus.

“When they came to go down any steep hills, the Parthians would set upon them with their arrowes, because they could go down but fair and softly. But then again, the soldiers of the legion, that carried great shields, returned back and enclosed the light-armed in the midst amongst them, and did kneel one knee upon the ground, and so set downe their shields before them; and they of the second rank also covered them of the first rank, and the third also covered the second; and so from ranke to ranke all were covered. Inso-much that this manner of covering and shading themselves with shields was devised after the fashion of laying tiles upon houses, and to sight was like the steps of a theatre, and is a most strong defence and bulwarke against all arrowes and shot that falleth on it. When the Parthians saw this countenance of the Roman soldiers of the legion which kneeled on the ground in that sort upon one knee, supposing that they had beene wearied with travel, they laid down their bowes, and took their spears and launces, and came to fight with them man for man. Then the Romans suddenly rose upon their feete, and with the darts that they threw from them they slew the foremost, and put the rest to flight, and so did they the next day that followed. But by means of these dangers and letts, Antonius’ army could win no way in a day, by reason whereof they suffered great famine: for they could have but little corne, and yet were they daily driven to fight for it; and besides that, they had no instruments to grind it, to make bread of it. For the most part of them had been left

behind, because the beasts that carried them were either dead or else employed to carry them that were sore and wounded. For the famine was so extream great, that the eighth part of a bushell of wheate was sold for fifty drachmas,* and they sold barley bread by the weight of silver. In the end they were compelled to live on herbes and roots; but they found few of them that men do commonly eat of, and were enforced to taste of them that were never eaten before: among the which there was one that killed them, and made them out of their wits. For he that had once eaten of it, his memory went from him, and he knew not what he did, but only busied himself in moving and turning over every stone that he found, as though it had been a matter of great weight. All the campe over, men were busily stooming to the ground, digging and carrying off stones from one place to another; but at the last, they cast up a great deal of bile, and suddenly died, because they lacked wine, which was the only soveraigne remedy to cure that disease."†

Such were their suffering till they crossed the Araxes and gained the rich and friendly country of Armenia. The retreat from Phraata, or Phraaspa, the extreme point of advance, a distance of three hundred miles, had occupied twenty-seven days, and been signalized by eighteen battles. On mustering the army it was found that twenty thousand infantry and four thousand horse, nearly a quarter of the whole force, had perished by the joint effects of sickness and the sword.

After a long series of wars waged with various success during a period of four hundred years, the plains of Assyria again beheld the destruction of a Roman army under circumstances of still greater interest. The emperor Julian, redoubted for his brilliant victories in Gaul and Germany, advanced with a veteran army of sixty-five thousand soldiers, to avenge the insulted majesty of the

* Nominally about 1*l.* 13*s.*; but calculations of this sort convey little instruction, unless the relative value of the precious metals, then and now, were known.

† North's Plutarch; Life of Antony.

empire, and retaliate upon the Persian monarch (for a Persian dynasty again occupied the throne of Darius, long held by a Grecian, and then by a Parthian conqueror) for the invasion of Mesopotamia, in the reign of his predecessor Constantius. He directed his march towards Ctesiphon,* where he crossed the Tigris, and advanced into the central provinces, in hope, like Alexander at Arbela, to rest the issue of the war on the event of a single battle. Up to this point success attended his arms; but now the evils which had destroyed his predecessors began to work their fatal effect on him; wherever he turned the country was laid waste, the treachery of his guides caused him to spend several days in fruitless wandering, which diminished the already scanty stores of the army, and at length, without a blow being struck, he found himself compelled to give the signal for retreat.

"The very morning, however, upon which the army began to retrace its steps, a cloud of dust appeared in the distant horizon. Many thought that it was caused by the troops of wild asses which abound in those regions; others more justly augured from it an enemy's approach. Being thus uncertain and fearful lest by advancing they should fall into some snare, the emperor put an early stop to their march, and the night was spent in watchfulness and continual alarm. At sunrise, the glitter of distant armour announced the presence of the royal forces, and the day was spent in a succession of desultory and unsuccessful attacks. In the evening the Romans

* A city founded by the Parthians as the capital of their empire, on the eastern bank of the Tigris, nearly opposite to Seleucia, which was built shortly after the death of Alexander by Seleucus Nicator, and intended as the capital of the East. The history of Julian's campaign is full of interest, and will repay the perusal. It has, however, no particular connexion with the subject of this chapter, which has already reached length sufficient to preclude the introduction of extraneous matter, and we therefore are compelled to take up the narrative of Julian's proceedings only at the point where his misfortunes commenced.

arrived at a small town abounding in provisions, where they spent two days. Resuming their march, upon the first day they were exposed only to the same interruptions as before, but upon the third day, when the army had reached the district called Maranga, about dawn there appeared a vast multitude of Persians, with Merenes, general of the cavalry, two sons of the king, and many of the chief nobility.

"All the troops were armed in iron, every limb being protected by thick plates, the rigid joinings of which were adapted to the joints of the body; and a mask, fashioned to resemble the face, was so carefully fitted upon their heads, that, their whole bodies being plated with metal, the darts which struck them could pierce nowhere, except at the eyes or nostrils, before which there were narrow apertures for sight and breathing. Those who were armed with lances remained immovable, as if fixed with brazen chains: while near them the archers (from its very cradle the nation has grown powerful by its great reliance on that art) stretched their supple bows, with disparted arms, till the string touched their right breasts, while their left hands were in contact with the arrow head; and the shafts, thus skilfully driven, flew shrilly whistling, charged with deadly wounds. After them the affrighted mind could hardly bear the fearful aspect and savage yawns of the glittering elephants; by whose roar and smell, and unusual appearance, the horses were yet more terrified. Those who guided them wore hafted knives tied to their right hands, remembering the injury received from these animals at Nisibis; * that if the frantic animal became unmanageable by his driver, to prevent his carrying destruction into the ranks of his own army, as then happened, they might pierce the spine, where the skull is connected with the neck. For it was long ago discovered by Hasdrubal, the brother of Hannibal, that such was the speediest way of killing

* At the siege of Nisibis, in the invasion of Mesopotamia above mentioned, the elephants being brought up to the attack of a breach, became unmanageable from pain and terror, and did much damage to the assaulting force.

these beasts. All this being observed, not without much dread, the emperor proceeded with all confidence to draw up the infantry for battle in a half-moon with curving flanks;* and lest the advance of the archers should scatter our close array, he broke the efficacy of their arrow-flight by a rapid onset; and the word to engage being as usual given, the dense infantry of Rome dashed in the firm front of the enemy by a most spirited charge. The conflict growing hot, the clang of shields, and the melancholy crash of men and armour, leaving now no room for inactivity, covered the ground with gore and corpses; but the slaughter of the Persians was the greatest, who being often slack and faint in close conflict, fought at heavy disadvantage when foot was opposed to foot; though they use to battle bravely at a distance, and if they find themselves compelled to give way, deter the enemy from pursuit by a shower of arrows shot behind them. The Parthians then being routed by their overpowering strength, our soldiery, long since relaxed by a blazing sun, at the signal of recall went back to their tents, inspirited to higher daring for the future. In this battle the Persian loss appeared, as I have said, to be the greater; our own was very light." Milton has a gorgeous description of the Parthian power and method of making war, in which his immense learning is profusely introduced to illustrate this subject

"The Parthian king

In Ctesiphon† hath gathered all his host
Against the Scythian, whose incursions wild
Have wasted Sogdiana; to her aid
He marches now in haste: see though from fa-
His thousands, in what martial equipage
They issue forth; steel bows and shafts their arm
Of equal dread in flight, or in pursuit;
All horsemen, in which fight they most excel;

* *Lunari acie, sinuatisque lateribus occursuros hosti manipulos instruebat.*

† Ctesiphon—see note, p. 214. Sogdiana, the northern province of the Parthian empire, adjoining Scythia.

See how in warlike muster they appear,
In rhombs and wedges, and half-moons and wings.

"He looked, and saw what numbers numberless
The city gates out-poured, light-armed troops
In coats of mail and military pride;
In mail their horses clad, yet fleet and strong,
Prancing their riders bore, the flower and choice
Of many provinces from bound to bound^d
From Arachosia,* from Candaor east,
And Margiana to the Hyrcanian cliffs
Of Caucasus, and dark Iberian dales,
From Atropatia, and the neighbouring plains
Of Adiabene, Media, and the south
Of Susiana, to Balsara's haven.

He saw them in their forms of battle ranged,
How quick they wheeled, and flying, behind them shot
Sharp sleet of arrowy showers against the face
Of their pursuers, and overcame by flight;
The fields, all iron, cast a gleaming brown:
Nor wanted clouds of foot, nor on each horn
Cuirassiers all in steel for standing fight,
Chariots or elephants indorsed with towers
Of archers, nor of labouring pioneers
A multitude, with spades and axes armed
To lay hills plain, fell woods, or valleys fill
Or where plain was raise hill, or overlay
With bridges rivers proud, as with a yoke;
Mules after these, camels, and dromedaries,
And waggons fraught with utensils of war. ,

* Arachosia, now Arakhaj, one of the eastern provinces of Persia, separated by Candahar (Candaor) from the Indus. Margiana, a province of Parthia, south of the Oxus, and rather between that river and the Caspian Sea. Iberia lies between the Caspian and Black seas, south of Caucasus. Atropatia is south of Iberia, separated from Armenia by the Araxes. Adiabene is the western part of Babylonia. The poet proceeds southward through Media to Susiana, the province of Susa, on the lowest part of the eastern bank of the Tigris, to Balsara, a celebrated city and emporium of the East; having completed the circuit of the Parthian empire, except the deserts forming its southern boundary, between the Persian Gulf and Arachosia, where he began.

Such forces met not, nor so wide a camp
When Agrican with all his northern powers
Besieged Albracca, as romances tell,
The city of Gallaphrone, from thence to win
The fairest of her sex, Angelica
His daughter, sought by many prowest knights
Both Paynim and the peers of Charlemain.
Such and so numerous was their chivalry.*

"After the battle," Ammianus continues, "three days being passed in repose, that each might cure his own or his neighbour's wounds, intolerable want of victuals began to afflict us; and the burning both of corn and green crops having reduced men and horses to the extremity of distress, a large part of the provisions brought by the chief officers of the army for their own use was distributed to the indigent soldiery. And the emperor, who, in place of delicacies prepared with regal luxury, satisfied his hunger under a small tent, with a scanty portion of meal and water, which even the labouring common soldier would have disdained; careless of his own safety, performed whatever services were required in the tents of his poor comrades. Then having withdrawn awhile to an anxious and uncertain repose, devoted not to sleep, but to some literary work, written in the camp, and under the tent-skins, in emulation of Julius Cæsar, in the dead of night, while deeply meditating upon some philosopher, he beheld, as he acknowledged to his friends, that vision of the genius of the empire which he had seen in Gaul, when about to reach the dignity of Augustus,† pass sorrowfully from the tent in mourning habit, his head and horn of abundance covered with a veil. For a moment he was fixed

* *Paradise Regained*, iii. 300—344.

† The night before Julian consented to accept the imperial purple at the hands of his rebellious army, he saw in a vision (so at least he told his friends) one with the attributes of the tutelary genius of the empire. The phantom complained that hitherto his desire to serve the sleeper had been frustrated, and warned him to accept the proffered dignity as he valued the continuance of his care and protection.

in amazement; yet, superior to all fear, he commended futurity to the gods. As he rose from his lowly couch, to supplicate the powers of heaven with the rites deprecatory of misfortune, a blazing torch appeared to flash across the sky, and vanished, leaving him filled with horror lest it were the star of Mars which thus openly menaced him.”*

Before daybreak he consulted the Etruscan soothsayers, who still retained the monopoly of this profitable art, concerning the meaning of this portent. They replied that on no account should anything be commenced, in obedience to the rules of their science, which forbade the giving battle, or undertaking military operations, subsequent to the appearance of such a meteor: but the emperor neglected their predictions, and gave order to march. Taught by experience not rashly to close with the firm ranks of the legions, the Persians hovered all around, and while Julian, unarmed by reason of the heat, advanced to reconnoitre in front, he was alarmed by tidings of an attack upon the rear. Forgetful or careless of his want of armour, he hurried to the spot, which was scarcely reached when a fresh alarm came that the van, which he had quitted, was similarly menaced, and at the same moment the iron-clothed Parthian cavalry, supported by elephants, dashed in upon the flank. The light-armed troops, encouraged by their sovereign's presence, rushed forwards, and put to flight these formidable assailants; and while Julian, forgetting the prudence of a general in his ardour, cheered them on, a dart grazed his uplifted arm, and penetrated deep into his unprotected side. He tried to draw it out, but the sharp edges cut the tendons of his fingers; and falling in a swoon from his horse, he was borne back by his attendants to the camp. The prince being withdrawn, it is scarce credible with what ardour the soldiery, heated by rage and anger, flew to their revenge, and though the dust blinded them, and the heat relaxed their sinews, yet, as if released from discipline by the fall of their

* Ammianus Marcellinus, lib. xxv. 2.

leader, they rushed prodigal of life upon the enemies' steel. The Persians, on the other hand, shot still more eagerly, till they were almost hidden by the constant arrow flight; while the bulk and nodding plumes of the elephants stationed in their front struck terror into horse and man. Night put an end to a bloody and indecisive contest, in which fifty of the chief Persian nobility fell, including the two generals, Merenes and Nohodares.

This success, however, was dearly purchased by the death of Julian, which occurred soon after he reached the camp. He made a short address to those officers who surrounded his bed, expressing his willingness to die, and a hope that the empire would devolve on a worthy successor, declining to interfere, or in any way direct their choice; and breathed his last while arguing upon the nature of the soul. Among the tumult and intrigues consequent upon the election of a new emperor, Jovian, a household officer of the highest rank, was chosen, rather as a means of reconciling the disputes of others of higher pretensions, than for his personal merits, which rose not above mediocrity. The news of Julian's death was carried to Sapor the Persian king by deserters, and he, inspired by the death of his most formidable enemy, pursued the retreating army with increased vigour. On one occasion the heavy-armed horse and elephants broke the Jovian and Herculean legions which had been trained to war in the able school of Diocletian; on another the Persian cavalry broke into the camp, and penetrated almost to the emperor's tent. At length, after five days of constant harass and alarm, they reached the town of Dura on the Tigris. Four days were here consumed in repelling the unceasing attacks of the Persians, until the army, impatient of this daily annoyance, hopeless of bringing the enemy to battle, and stimulated by a notion that the Roman frontier was at no great distance, impatiently demanded permission to recross the Tigris. The emperor and his officers in vain pointed out to them the river swollen by the summer floods, and entreated them not to trust it dangerous whirlpools: they represented that most of the troops were unable to swim,

and showed the enemy, who lined the opposite bank of the overflowed river. But when these arguments proved vain, and dissatisfaction seemed ready to end in mutiny, a reluctant order was given that the Gauls and Germans, trained to the passage of rapid rivers from their youth, should first risk the attempt; in expectation that the others' obstinacy would be overcome by the spectacle of their fate, or else that their success would embolden and encourage the less able. Accordingly, as soon as the fall of night concealed their purpose, they passed the river, swimming or supported by skins, occupied the opposite bank, and made slaughter of the Persians, who had been lulled to sleep by the fancied security of their position. Their comrades, informed of their success by signal, were only restrained from emulating their courage and success by the engineers undertaking to construct a bridge upon inflated hides. But these attempts were baffled by the strength of the stream, and at the end of two days, all sorts of food being consumed, the soldiery, reduced to want and desperation, were loud in complaint of the ignoble death for which they were reserved.

This would have been the time for a vigorous and decisive blow; but the Persian king was staggered in his confidence by the Romans' obstinate and successful resistance. The destruction among his troops had been severe; the loss of elephants unequalled in any former war: while his foes were seasoned and encouraged by a continuance of successful resistance, and, instead of being intimidated by the death of their noble general, seemed rather to consult revenge than safety, careless whether they were extricated from their difficulty by a brilliant victory or a memorable death. These considerations, and the yet unbroken power of the empire, induced him to send ambassadors to treat of peace. But the conditions proposed were hard and humiliating, and four days were spent amid the agonies of famine in fruitlessly discussing what was best to be done, which if diligently employed would have brought the army into the fruitful district of Corduene, distant but a hundred and fifty miles from the scene of their sufferings. Five provinces

situated east of the Tigris were to be given up, together with three important fortresses in Mesopotamia, *Castra Maurorum*, Singara, and Nisibis, the latter uncaptured since the Mithridatic wars, and regarded as the especial key of the East. The strong expression of Ammianus is, that it would have been better to have fought ten battles, than to have surrendered one of these things. But a crowd of flatterers surrounded the timid prince; they urged the necessity of a speedy return, lest other pretenders to the empire should start up, and his weak and easy temper was readily persuaded to acquiesce.

The delay occasioned by these negotiations, in which, in return for such important concessions, even the safe passage of the Tigris was not provided for, proved fatal to numbers, who, impatient of the sufferings which they endured, plunged secretly into the stream, and were swallowed up by its eddies, or, if they reached the shore, were slain or sold into a distant captivity by the Saracens and Persians. And when at last the trumpet gave the signal of passage, it was wonderful to see how every one hurried to escape the danger which they still feared upon the eastern bank. Wicker vessels hastily constructed, to which their beasts of burthen were attached, or the hides of sheep and oxen, were the precarious means of transport to which most were reduced: the emperor and his suite crossed in a few small boats which had laboriously accompanied the march, and continued to ply backwards and forwards, as long as any remained upon the farther shore. News came meanwhile that the Persians were constructing a bridge, with intent of falling suddenly and secretly upon the exhausted enemy; but either the intelligence was false, or the betrayal of their intention caused the Persians to desist from the meditated treachery, and Jovian, released from this apprehension, arrived by long and fatiguing marches at the town of Hatra, of ancient fame in the wars of Trajan and Severus. From hence, for seventy miles, an arid plain extended, offering only salt, fetid water, and the bitter, nauseous herbs of the desert: and such provision as opportunity afforded was made for the further march by filling the water

vessels, and slaughtering camels and other beasts of burthen. But a six days' march, through a country where not even grass was to be found, reduced them to extremity; and it was with no small joy that they hailed a convoy of provisions, doubly welcome as providing for the relief of present distress, and assuring the fidelity of Procopius and Sebastian, the powerful officers whom Julian had sent to co-operate with him in Armenia. Passing Thilsaphata the army at length reached Nisibis, and found an end of its distresses under the walls of the city, which the emperor was unwilling, perhaps ashamed, to enter.

In all these cases the thirst of conquest worked its own punishment by subjecting its votaries to the guidance of will instead of reason, and like all other passions, when indulged, misleading them both as to the character and the probable consequence of their actions. The expedition of Darius is said, indeed, to have been prompted by policy; but we look in vain for prudence and sound judgment in his unavailing pursuit of the Scythians, in his protracted stay, in the treacherous abandonment of a part of his army, or in his hurried retreat; while his resolution (if Herodotus be credited) of destroying the bridge, and thus, in case of reverses, cutting off all hope of escape, could only have been suggested by a frantic presumption in his own power and fortune. In the other cases an eager desire and hope of terminating the war by one decisive blow, and a well-grounded confidence that in fair field no troops would stand the shock of the Roman legions, stifled the voice of common sense, of wisdom and of experience, which concurred in teaching that the desired opportunity was attainable only by the enemy's misconduct, and that the failure of success necessarily involved severe misfortune. We may draw from hence a lesson touching the pernicious influence of power and prosperity upon the mind. The warning of Amasis to Polycrates* contains valuable instruction, though we re-

* Polycrates, tyrant of Samos, 'was remarkable for the favourable issue of all his undertakings. Amasis, king of

ject the superstitious and unworthy notion of the Deity upon which it is founded, and the equally superstitious remedy proposed. It is true that a life of unbroken prosperity is frequently terminated by some memorable reverse, but the effect of such prosperity upon ourselves is the greatest of evils, and the parent of all the others which may befall us: and this chapter may be considered as a supplement to the one which has been devoted to the effects of absolute power upon the morals and intellect; for the judicial blindness produced by an inferior degree of grandeur and good fortune resembles that species of insanity which we have noticed, and differs from it rather in degree than in nature. History abounds in examples of such infatuation; the most striking and perhaps the most important of them, it has been reserved for our own age to witness.

If ever there was an instance of a powerful mind

Egypt, wrote thus to him: "It is pleasant to hear of the good fortune of a friend and connexion; but your extraordinary prosperity pleases not me, knowing, as I do, that the Deity is envious: and I would have those for whom I am interested meet both with success and failure, and think a chequered life better than unclouded fortune. For I have never heard of any man who, being prosperous in all things, has not at last perished miserably, root and branch. Be persuaded, then, and take this precaution against your good fortune; select whatever you have most valuable, and would most regret to lose, and so bestow this that it shall never come to man again; and if, in future, good and evil fortune are not blended, remedy it in the manner which I now propose." Polycrates took the advice and cast into the sea an engraved gem of extraordinary value; and within a few days a fish was presented to him within which the gem was found. Amasis, hearing of it, renounced all friendship and connexion with him, as a man predestined to an evil fate. The event must have strongly confirmed the notion from which the advice proceeded; for Polycrates having given offence to the satrap of Sardis, or, as is more likely, being considered too powerful and dangerous a neighbour to remain on the Ionian coast, was entrapped into that nobleman's power, and crucified by him.—Herod. iii. 40.

delivered over for its ruin to a strong delusion, it is to be found in Napoleon's campaign in Russia. An unparalleled series of victories appears to have confirmed the turn of his mind to fatalism, and to have inspired a belief that no difficulties were insuperable by his genius and fortune. It is in such a belief, and in his natural resoluteness of purpose, aggravated into inflexibility by the habit of dictating to all who came within his widely extended sphere, that we must look for the explanation of conduct into which no man would have been betrayed while in the full and sane possession of his judgment, however just and unbounded his confidence in himself and his troops. That he was fully aware of the difficulties which he was about to meet (it is impossible that they should have escaped his penetration) is evident from his own declarations. "For masses like those we are about to move, if precautions be not taken, the grain of no country can suffice. The result of my movements will be to assemble four hundred thousand men on a single point. There will be nothing to expect from the country, and it will be necessary to have everything within ourselves."* Immense preparations were accordingly made, but made in vain, for a very small portion of them ever reached the borders of Russia, and those too late to supply the needs of the army. It is here that the obstinacy and infatuation of which we have spoken first appear. Too impatient to wait for the supplies which he had declared indispensable, and unable to resist the temptation of endeavouring to gain his object by one decisive stroke, Napoleon plunged headlong into a savage country, without a commissariat, and with a most insufficient hospital department, and suffered grievous loss before an enemy was even seen. Without anything approaching to a general action, the effective force under his immediate command was reduced in six weeks, between the passage of the Niemen and his departure from Witepsk, from two hundred and ninety-seven thousand to one hundred and eighty-five

* Scott, vol. vii. p. 215.

thousand ; and was besides in so shattered and unsoldier-like a condition, that a fortnight later, at Smolensk, Napoleon himself declared halt or retreat to be impracticable. "This army cannot stop: with its composition, and in its disorganized state, movement alone supports it. We may advance at its head, but not stop or retreat. It is an army of attack, not of defence ; of operation, not of position."* The desperate enterprise was therefore pursued, and the nominal victory of Borodino, which cost in killed and wounded thirty thousand men, gave Moscow into his hands—the specious prize which he hazarded so much to gain. But the advantages hoped from its possession vanished when in his grasp, and this seeming success proved but a snare to disguise his failure, and ensure destruction by delaying retreat.

We probably shall never be satisfied as to the real origin of the conflagration of Moscow. If the voluntary act of the Russian people, it deserves to be classed, with the abandonment of Athens, among the noblest acts of patriotism recorded ; but with this difference, that the Athenians trusted their property to the victor's mercy, the Russians inflicted on themselves the utmost losses of war, rather than allow an invader to profit by the shelter of their homes. That a rugged but deep love of their country did animate even those among them who had least to love, is certain. Palaces and hamlets were alike committed to the flames ; the serf and the prince were equally indignant at their national injuries. "It is an admitted fact, that when the French, in order to induce their refractory prisoners to labour in their service, branded some of them in the hand with the letter N. as a sign that they were the serfs of Napoleon, one peasant laid his hand upon a block of wood, and struck it off with the axe which he held in the other, in order to free himself from the supposed thralldom."†

Napoleon depended on the possession of Moscow as a sure means of dictating peace to Russia on his own terms. As formerly at Vienna and Berlin, he expected to give

* Segur, liv. vi. chap. 6.

† Scott, p. 301.

laws in the Kremlin to a conquered nation ; and his disappointment in finding this vantage-ground crumble under his feet was extreme. It was lost, however, irrecoverably lost, for the Russians had no longer anything to hope or fear for their capital, and Moscow, ruined and deserted, was no place for the invader to pass a five-months' winter in. Policy therefore prompted an immediate retreat, sufficient time being allowed to refresh and re-organize the army ; but Napoleon still clung with obstinacy to his original plan of dictating a peace to Alexander from his capital, and sacrificed a fortnight of precious time to this deceitful hope. It was frustrated ; the Russian monarch refused to listen to any overtures of peace, and the French, who on the 12th of September had hailed Moscow as the goal of their labours, quitted it on the 19th of October, to retrace their steps over a ravaged country through a numerous and exasperated enemy.

We must touch very lightly upon the horrors of the retreat, confining ourselves to a brief statement of the leading facts, and of the results of the whole. Famine, cold, and the sword combined to punish an unjust aggression. When the French left Moscow they numbered one hundred and twenty thousand men under arms, with an immense train of baggage and camp followers : in twenty-six days, from October 19th to November 13th, when the Emperor quitted Smolensk, their organized force was reduced to thirty-six thousand men, and they had lost three hundred cannon. Napoleon's partisans have tried to shelter him from blame, by alleging the premature rigour of winter as the cause of this wholesale destruction. No doubt cold was the main agent in it, but the nature of a Russian winter was well known, and should have been considered in the scheme of the campaign ; and so far was it from being premature, that the frost did not begin till November 7th, only three days before the French van and the Emperor arrived at Smolensk. Other causes aided to produce this result. Napoleon intended to return to the above-named town by the unwasted route of Kalouga and Medyn, but the

Russian army barred his way, and, after an obstinate contest,* turned him back on the ravaged country through which he had already passed. Here neither food, shelter, nor clothing could be procured, and thousands fell victims rather to the want of all appliances to bear it, than to the intolerable severity of the winter itself. Numbers fell in battle, or were intercepted and slain, or made prisoners by the ever active hostility of the Cossacks who hovered round their march: still the loss sustained in warfare was small in comparison to that which resulted from the combined operation of hunger and cold. The appearance of this new enemy, and its effects, moral and physical, are powerfully, though rather theatrically, described by the Comte de Segur, himself a sharer in the miseries which he describes.

“On the 6th of November the sky declared itself. Its azure disappeared. The army marched enveloped in cold vapours, which soon thickened into a vast cloud, and descended in large flakes of snow upon us. It seemed as if the sky were coming down, and uniting with this hostile land and people to complete our ruin. All things are indistinguishable; while the soldier struggles to force his way through the drifting whirlwind, the driven snow fills up all hollows, and its surface conceals unknown depths which yawn under our feet. The men are swallowed by them, and the weakest, resigning themselves to fate, there find a grave. Those who follow turn aside, but the storm dashes in their faces the snow from heaven and the drift from the earth, and seems to oppose itself rancorously to their march. The Russian winter under this new form attacks them from all sides; it pierces their thin dress and torn shoes. Their wet clothes freeze on them, a sharp and strong wind impedes their breath, which at the instant of expiration forms round the mouth icicles depending from the beard. The

* It is curious that Kutusoff and Napoleon were actually retreating from Malo-Yarowslavitch, the scene of the battle, at the same moment; the one fearing another attack, the other despairing of success in forcing the position.

wretches, shivering, still drag themselves on, till the snow which clogs their feet, or some chance obstacle, causes them to stumble and fall. There they groan in vain: the snow soon covers them; slight elevations alone distinguish them: behold their graves! Everywhere the road is strewn with these undulations like a burial-ground: the most fearless, the most unfeeling are moved, and turn aside their eyes as they pass in haste. But before, around, every thing is snow—the sight is lost in this immense and sad uniformity; the imagination is astounded: it is like a huge winding-sheet, with which nature envelops the army. The only objects which appear from out it are sombre pines, trees of the tombs, with their funereal verdure; and the gigantic fixedness of their black trunks and their deep gloom complete this desolate aspect of a general mourning, and of an army dying amid the decease of nature. . . . Then comes the night, a night of sixteen hours! But on that snow which covers all things, one knows not where to stop, where to rest, where to find roots for food, or dry wood for firing. However, fatigue, darkness, and repeated orders stop those whom their own physical and moral force, and the efforts of their officers, have retained together. They seek to establish themselves; but the ever-active storm scatters the first preparations for a bivouac. The pines, laden with hoar-frost, resist the flames; and the snow upon them, mixed with that which falls continually from the sky, and that lying on the earth, which melts with the efforts of the soldier and the first effect of the fires, extinguishes those fires and the strength and courage of the men.

“When the flame at length is raised, officers and soldiers prepare around it their sad meal, composed of lean and bloody fragments of flesh, torn from wornout horses, and, for a very few, some spoonfuls of rye flour diluted with snow-water. The next day soldiers, laid stone-dead in circles, mark the bivouacs, and the ground about them is strewn with the bodies of many thousand horses.

“From this day, men began to reckon less upon each

other. In this army, lively, susceptible of all impressions, and inclined to speculate from its advanced civilization, disorder soon gained footing, discouragement and insubordination spread rapidly, the imagination wandering without bounds in evil as well as good. Henceforward at every bivouac, at every difficult passage, some portion of the yet organized troops detached itself, and fell into disorder. Yet there were some who resisted this mighty contagion: they were the officers, subalterns, and seasoned soldiers. These were extraordinary men; they encouraged themselves by repeating the name of Smolensk, which they felt they were approaching, and where everything had been promised to them.

"Thus since this deluge of snow, and the redoubled cold which it announced, all, officers and soldiers alike, preserved or lost their strength of mind, according to their age, their character, and temperament. He of our chiefs, whom till then we had seen the strictest in maintaining discipline, now found himself no longer in his element. Thrown out of all his fixed ideas of regularity and method, he was reduced to despair by so universal a disorder, and judging sooner than others that all was lost, he felt himself ready to abandon all."*

The army quitted Smolensk in four divisions: that under the command of the Emperor, which led the way, marched on the 14th November. Ney, who throughout this long retreat brought up the rear, who distinguished himself amid its horrors by indomitable courage and constancy, and was hailed by the general voice as the hero of the army, remained behind until the 17th. On the 20th all were once more united at Oreza, after seven days of almost continued fighting, in which nothing but the sluggishness of the Russian general saved the French from destruction, and Napoleon from captivity or death. Opposed with fifteen thousand men, half starved and half armed, to a force treble that number, and in good condition, the Russians must have overthrown him by mere physical force, had they ventured upon a vigorous attack; but even in his distresses the presence of Napo-

* Segur, ix. 11

leon inspired awe. At no time do the brilliant qualities of the French troops appear more conspicuous than in this disastrous retreat: headed on all sides, inclosed by an overwhelming force, every general outmanœuvred or cut his way through the enemy,* fortunate if it cost him but half of his corps to preserve the remainder from the disgrace of surrender. Between Smolensk and Oreza the army was still further reduced to twelve thousand men, who still preserved their arms and their discipline, encumbered with thirty thousand stragglers, who grievously increased its wants and its embarrassments, without adding a single bayonet to its strength.

Hitherto its retreat had been unopposed, the Russian army having been unwilling or unable to head the French and compel them to force a passage by the sword; and being in possession of Oreza, it passed the river Dnieper at that town without opposition. But Admiral Tchitchagoff, the general in command of the Moldavian army, which was opposed to the Austrians on the south-eastern end of the French base of operation, finding them slack and unenterprising in the cause of an ally, or master rather, to whom in truth they owed little good will, left merely a division in the duchy of Warsaw to observe their movements, and himself marched upon Minsk and Borizoff, to cut off Napoleon's retreat. At the latter town there was a bridge over the Beresina, the place itself being on the eastern bank, and on the possession of the town and command of the bridge depended the means of crossing that river. Tchitchagoff however, owing to some mistake of the French general opposed to him, had taken that town, and though afterwards expelled, had made the bridge impassable in his retreat. It was necessary, therefore, to seek a passage elsewhere, and a place above Borizoff, called Studzianka, was selected, where the river was only fifty-five fathoms across. The chance

* During the whole retreat only one corps grounded arms to the enemy, and that not until it was surrounded and cut off from the main army, and reduced to extremity. This occurred just before the passage of the Beresina.

seemed desperate, for the opposite heights were occupied by six thousand Russians, and bridges were to be built, and the army was to defile across them under their fire ; but desperate as it was, this seemed their only hope, and Napoleon quitting the highway plunged into the thick pine-woods which border the Beresina, to conceal his march. The joy of the army may well be imagined, when, in traversing these forests, they met the division of Victor, of fifty thousand men, in good order, which had been employed in checking Wittgenstein upon the western flank. "They were ignorant of our disasters, which had been carefully hidden even from their chiefs. So that when, instead of a grand victorious column returning from Moscow, they saw behind Napoleon nothing but a train of squalid spectres, covered with rags, with women's pelisses, pieces of carpet, or squalid cloaks scorched red and burnt into holes by the fires, their feet wrapped up in tatters of all sorts, they stopped in terror. They saw with affright these poor fleshless soldiers file past, with faces like the grave, bristled with ghastly beards, without arms, without shame, marching in disorder with downcast heads, eyes fixed on the earth, and silent like a troop of captives."* So contagious was this spectacle, that on the first day two corps of Victor's army fell into the same state of disorganization.

Among other attempts to deceive Tchitchagoff and make him believe that a passage would be attempted elsewhere, some Jews had been interrogated concerning the passes of the river ; and to secure the breach of their faith, they had been sworn to meet the army on the Beresina, below Borizoff, with intelligence of the enemy. The stratagem succeeded ; they carried a false report to the Admiral, and he and Napoleon turned their backs on each other, and while the latter marched up the river to Studzianka, the former marched down it to a ford at Oukoholda. All night the French laboured to construct a bridge, expecting momentarily the first salvo of the Russian artillery. Napoleon passed a restless and

* Segur, xi. 3

agitated night in a château near the river, continually repairing to the spot on which his last hope of escape rested. At morning, when all were prepared for a desperate and almost hopeless struggle, they were equally astonished and delighted to see the Russian watch-fires abandoned and the opposing force in full retreat. Napoleon would scarce believe the tidings, and when at last convinced by the evidence of his own eyes, he cried in transport, "Then I have outwitted the Admiral."*

That day, November 26th, two bridges were completed, and the opposite bank was occupied by Ney. Two days and two nights elapsed before the Russians came up, but this valuable respite was lost, owing to the breaking of the bridge for artillery, and the insubordination of the stragglers, which rendered it impossible to force them across. On the night of the 26th they were dispersed among the neighbouring villages; on the 27th men, horses, and carriages rushed in an overwhelming mass, and choked the narrow entrance of the bridges: all efforts to restore order were fruitless, and it was necessary to employ force to clear a passage for the Emperor. A corps of grenadiers of the Guard declined from mere pity to open for themselves a way through these wretches. On the approach of night another simultaneous movement drove them all to seek shelter in the village of Studzianka, which was torn down to furnish materials for fires, from which they could not be moved; and thus another night was lost.

On the 28th, while Tchitchagoff on the right bank in vain endeavoured to drive Ney back upon the bridges, Wittgenstein, with vastly superior forces, attacked Victor, who still remained on the left bank with 6000 men to cover the retreat of his unhappy comrades. The first thunder of the artillery drove this confused mass pell-mell from their bivouacs to the bridge, and the first Russian bullet which fell among them seemed the signal of dis-

* Segur, xi. 5.

traction and despair. The horrors of the scene which ensued are almost too great for description. The more desperate forced a way sword in hand through the crowd; others, prompted by a horrible avarice, crushed their fellow-creatures under their carriage-wheels, rather than abandon the booty hitherto preserved with such labour; while those who felt themselves unequal to the struggle sat apart in silence, their eyes fixed on the snow which was soon to be their tomb. Once driven from the direct passage, men struggled in vain to climb the sides of the bridge; they were mercilessly forced back into the river: even women, their infants in their arms, shared this fate.

In the midst of this disorder the bridge for artillery broke, and all upon it, hurried on by the press, were engulfed in the stream. The shriek of the perishing multitude rose high above the storm and the battle: a witness of the scene declared that for weeks that horrible sound never quitted his ears. Artillery and waggons then poured to the other bridge, and on the steep and icy bank whole ranks were prostrated under their wheels, or crushed between their unmanageable weights. The noise of the storm, the roaring of cannon, the combined whistling of the wind and bullets, the bursting of shells, the cries, the groans, the fearful imprecations of the crowd, united in as horrible a concert as ever was presented to human ears. At nine at night Victor, who till then had kept Wittgenstein in check, commenced his retreat, and opened a dreadful passage through the wretches whom he had hitherto defended. A rear-guard was still left, and the bridges were allowed to stand that night, but in vain; men seemed to lose their reason with their discipline, and to be stupified by the horrors of their situation. The baggage and plunder, to which they clung so obstinately, was burnt: still it was impossible to drive them on. The next morning the French set fire to the bridge, and numbers lost their lives in a final effort of despair, endeavouring to swim the icy river or to cross upon the burning rafters. After the thaw,

according to the Russian reports, 36,000 bodies were found in the Beresina.*

The French, having forced back and defeated Tchitchagoff, were now delivered from all immediate danger; and Napoleon, who had hitherto refused to quit the army, hastened to Paris, where internal affairs called for his presence, leaving Murat his successor in command. From this time forward the Russians, except Platoff and his Cossacks, desisted from the pursuit; but this alleviation of their misfortunes was fully compensated by other evils. A change had already taken place in the weather; the storms which had hitherto been experienced were succeeded by a still more dreadful calm. Icy needles were seen floating in the air; the very birds fell stiff and frozen, everything possessing life or motion seemed congealed by the intensity of cold.

“In this empire of death we passed on like unhappy spirits. The dull, uniform sound of our march, the crackling of the snow, the low groans of dying men, alone broke this mighty melancholy silence. There was no more anger, no more imprecations, nothing to indicate a trace of heat; strength scarce remained even for prayer, and the majority fell even without complaint, whether through weakness or resignation, or that men only complain when they hope to move, and believe that they are pitied.

* To get at the exact truth is no easy matter, even where the means of ascertaining it seem most ample. General Gourgard, who also served in 1812, has published an elaborate criticism of the Comte de Segur's work, in which he maintains that the difficulties and losses of the passage of the Beresina have been excessively exaggerated,—that the French had 250 guns, which commanded the opposite bank, and 45,000 men under arms,—and that of women and children, whom Segur is always fond of introducing, there were next to none. Throughout the narrative we have followed Segur's account, as generally considered most authoritative, though he seems fond of writing for effect, and his accounts, as far as disparity of numbers in this latter part of the retreat is concerned, are somewhat startling.

"In fact, when for an instant they stopped through exhaustion, the winter laid her icy hand on them, and seized them as her prey. It was in vain then that, feeling themselves numbed, they arose, and speechless, stupified, advanced some paces like automaton: the blood freezing in their veins checked the beating of their hearts, and thence rushed to the head; then stricken by death, they staggered like drunken men. Real tears of blood dropped from their eyes, inflamed by the unvaried glare of snow, by want of sleep, and by the smoke of the bivouacs; deep sighs burst from their breasts; they looked to heaven, to us, and to the earth with a dismayed, fixed, and wild eye; it was their last adieu, perhaps a reproach to that savage nature which so tormented them. Soon they dropped, on their knees first, then on their hands; their heads wandered still some moments to right and left; a few sounds of agony escaped from the gasping mouth, which in its turn fell on the snow, and reddened it with livid blood, and their sufferings were over.

"Such were the last days of the grand army; its last nights were still more dreadful. When surprised by the dark at a distance from all dwellings, they stopped on the border of some wood; there they lighted fires, before which they spent the night, upright and immoveable as spectres. Unable to get enough of heat, they crowded so close to them, that their clothes and even frozen portions of their bodies were burnt. Then a horrible pain compelled them to enlarge their circle, and on the morrow they endeavoured in vain to rise."*

We trace no further the details of suffering too great for human endurance. Sixty thousand men are computed to have crossed the Beresina. Loison, with 15,000, advanced from Wilna to meet and protect them; he lost 12,000 by three days of frost. Other reinforcements joined the retreat; yet of this total, amounting fully to 80,000 men, there recrossed the Niemen but 20,000 stragglers, nine cannon, and 1000 infantry and cavalry

under arms, and the merit of preserving this remnant belongs to Ney alone. Murat, to whom Napoleon at his departure intrusted the command-in-chief, and other marshals, had ceased to issue orders, or commanding, had ceased to be obeyed: Ney alone retained some influence and authority. Ever last in the retreat, with a rear-guard sometimes of twenty men, he opposed a bold front to his pursuers, and pre-eminently merited the title of "bravest of the brave," when the tried valour of others was changed into confusion and despair

Scott's summary of the total loss in the campaign runs thus:—

Slain in battle	125,000
Died from fatigue, hunger, and the severity of the climate . . }	132,000
Prisoners, comprehending 48 generals, 3000 officers, and upwards of 190,000 soldiers }	193,000
	<hr/> 450,000



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HISTORICAL PARALLELS.

CHAPTER VII.



Marathon—Battle of Tours—Poëma del Cid—Siege of Vienna by the Turks in 1683—Battle of Morgarten—Battle of Sempach.

UPON the expulsion of Hippias the direction of Athenian politics passed into the hands of Cleisthenes, son of Megacles, the head of the Alcæonidæ. He soon found a rival in Isagoras, a man of noble extraction, whose popularity with the rich and noble preponderated over his

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own; and being in consequence driven to advocate the popular cause, and thus recovering the ascendant, he introduced several changes tending to make the constitution more democratical. Isagoras sought to regain his advantage by foreign aid; and at his suggestion Cleomenes, one of the kings of Sparta, required the expulsion of the Alcmaeonidæ, as an atonement for the sacrilegious murder of Cylon's partisans, in which they had been the chief actors. Offensive as such an interference appears, the religious feelings of Greece gave weight to the requisition, which was besides backed by the whole power of Sparta: and in obedience to it, Cleisthenes and his chief supporters withdrew. Not content with this, the Spartan king went with a small force to Athens, and proceeded to banish seven hundred families as concerned in the sacrilege, to change the forms of the constitution, and place all power in the hands of Isagoras and his friends. But he miscalculated the forbearance of the Athenians. Fearful as they were of a rupture with their powerful rival, they flew to arms, and besieged Cleomenes in the citadel. On the third day he and his troops surrendered on condition that they should be allowed to depart, and Cleisthenes, returning, reassumed the direction of affairs.

His first object was to find some assistance in the war which appeared inevitable; and as the Persian empire was now at its height, he sent ambassadors to Sardis, where the satrap or governor of Lydia resided, to request admission to the Persian alliance. The satrap inquired who the Athenians were, and where they lived, and then scornfully answered, that if they would give earth and water to King Darius, in token of subjection, their request should be granted; otherwise they must depart. The ambassadors complied, but on returning to Athens they were strongly censured. This was the first public transaction between Greece and Persia.

As was expected, the Lacedæmonians invaded Attica, but the Corinthians refused to support them, and this attempt to procure the restoration of Hippias failed. Thus baffled, they summoned a meeting of their allies,

at which the banished chief was invited to be present ; but here again their views were frustrated by the agency of the Corinthians. Hippias returning to Sigeum went thence to Sardis, with the view of persuading the satrap Artaphernes to reduce Athens, and replace him in the monarchy, under vassalage to the Persian monarch. The Athenians on receiving these tidings sent to request Artaphernes not to listen to their banished subjects ; but they were met by a peremptory command to receive back Hippias as they wished to be safe. From this time they considered themselves openly at war with Persia.

Under these circumstances, when an insurrection broke out among the Asiatic Greeks of Ionia and Æolis, the Athenians readily gave their assistance to the revolters. Twenty ships of theirs, with five of the Eretrians, joined the Ionian fleet ; the collective force disembarked at Ephesus, marched sixty miles into the interior, took Sardis by surprise, and burnt it. Returning, they were entirely defeated under the walls of Ephesus, and the Athenians then withdrew their ships, and took no further part in the war. These events took place B.C. 499.

After the Ionians were subdued, Darius bent himself to revenge the destruction of Sardis upon the Athenians and Eretrians. In the year 492 Mardonius led an army against them through Macedonia, but it suffered such severe losses by land and sea, that he returned to winter in Asia, without having reached even the borders of Greece. The following year heralds were sent into Greece to demand of every city earth and water in token of submission. Many obeyed, but Lacedæmon and Athens refused, and cruelly threw the heralds at the one place into a pit, at the other into a well, bidding them take from thence earth and water. In 490 Darius sent a second armament under command of Datis and Artaphernes. They crossed the Ægean Sea, to avoid the tedious march through Macedonia, landed in Eubœa, reduced and enslaved the Eretrians, and thence under the guidance of Hippias sailed to Marathon, on the north-east coast of Attica.

Athens was fortunate in numbering among her citizens, at this critical period, men able, in the proud boast of Themistocles, to make a great city of a small one. In the time of Pisistratus, the Dolonci, a tribe of Thracians who lived in the Thracian Chersonese, being pressed in war by the Apsinthii, sent to the Delphic oracle to request advice. They were directed to invite him who should first admit them to his hospitality, to become the founder of a colony in their country. Departing, they passed through Phocis and Bœotia without being offered entertainment by any person; then entering Attica, they passed the house of Miltiades, son of Cypselus, an Athenian of the noblest extraction, being descended from the heroes Æacus and the Salaminian Ajax, whose son Philæus became an Athenian citizen, and founded the family of which we speak. Miltiades was sitting in his porch, and observing persons in a foreign dress pass by, bearing lances in their hands, a practice long disused by the Athenians, he called to them, and offered them refreshment and rest. Upon this they explained the object of their mission, and entreated him to comply with the god's directions. Miltiades, discontented with the superiority assumed by Pisistratus, was well inclined to accede to their request. He went immediately to Delphi to obtain further directions from the oracle, and was determined by the answer he received to remove to the Chersonese, whither he conducted as many of his fellow-citizens as chose to follow him, and on his arrival was made tyrant of the Chersonese by the Thracians.*

Miltiades died childless, and was succeeded by his nephew Stesagoras, son of Cimon, who also died childless, being murdered after a short residence in the country; and on this Hippias and Hipparchus, who then

* This expression of Herodotus, that the Thracians themselves made Miltiades tyrant (κατιστήσαντο τύραννον), illustrates the meaning of the word: they invested him not with the power of oppressing them at pleasure, but with a form of authority for which the Grecian constitutions offered no precedent.

bore rule in Athens, and whose policy was to encourage monarchical, or as the Greeks would have called it, *tyrannical* government in every country connected with Attica, sent out Miltiades, son of Cimon, and brother to the deceased, to assume his authority. Upon his arrival Miltiades confined himself to the house, as if to show respect for his brother's memory; the chief men of the country collected from all the towns of the Chersonese to honour him by sharing in his mourning, and were thrown into prison. He married Hegesipyle, daughter of Olorus, king of Thrace, probably to strengthen himself by an alliance with that powerful neighbour, and took 500 mercenaries into pay. Thus, at Athens, in the Chersonese, and at Florence, that authority which originally was the free gift of the people, was changed in the second or third generation into an arbitrary government maintained by force; and hence all elective governments may draw a warning, not to suffer two members of the same family to be placed in succession at the head of the state, however great their merits.

Miltiades assumed the sovereignty B.C. 515. Darius invaded Scythia B.C. 507 or 508, and he, like many other Greeks, followed in that monarch's train by compulsion. In revenge for that invasion, according to Herodotus, and perhaps in consequence of the anger expressed by them against the Ionians for not breaking the bridge over the Ister, the Scythians overran the Chersonese, and obliged Miltiades to fly; but he was recalled by his Thracian subjects, a circumstance creditable to his conduct as a ruler, however questionable the means by which he obtained his authority. Meanwhile, between the years 500 and 493, the Asiatic Greeks, supported by the islanders, had rebelled from Darius and had been subdued, and the Persian fleet, after reducing the islands Chios, Lesbos, and Tenedos, sailed for the Hellespont, and laid waste the Grecian cities on the European shore. Miltiades, whether he had been concerned in the revolt, or feared that the king might owe him no gratitude for having advised the destruction of the bridge over the Ister, waited no longer than till the Persian fleet reached

Tenedos, and then filled five triremes with his effects, and returned to Athens. He was closely pursued, and one of the ships, on board of which his son had embarked, was taken: the youth was taken as a valuable prize to Darius, who treated him with great humanity and gave him an estate and wife. Miltiades and the others reached Athens, and found there a new danger. He was prosecuted for the very indefinite crime of "tyrannising in the Chersonese," but obtained an acquittal, and rose into favour with the people, for he was elected one of the strategi, or board of generals. Aristides was among his colleagues.

When the Athenians heard that the Persians were come, they marched to Marathon; but before quitting the city they sent to Sparta a citizen named Phidippides, who was a running messenger by trade. And he on his return related that as he crossed the Parthenian mountain, which is above Tegea, the god Pan called to him by name, and bade him tell the Athenians, that in neglecting his worship they neglected a deity well disposed towards them, who had often done them service, and would again. After the victory the Athenians, believing this to be true, dedicated to Pan a temple in the Acropolis, and instituted yearly sacrifices in his honour.

The many marvellous stories related by Herodotus have thrown considerable discredit both upon his veracity and his judgment: of late his value has been very generally recognised. There can be no doubt but that in giving this relation he strictly discharged his duty as an historian. The fact of a temple being dedicated proves the tale to have been generally credited, and not of his making. It was his business not to pass it over in silence; and even if he had been sceptical, his object in writing was not to amend the national religion. We must suppose it therefore to have been devised either by Phidippides himself, or, which is more likely, by the Athenian leaders, to encourage the people to their unequal contest. Several similar stories of preternatural assistance promised and bestowed, are current in Spanish history. "Now it came to pass, that while King Don

Ferrando lay before Coimbra there came a pilgrim from the land of Greece on pilgrimage to Santiago: his name was Estiano, and he was a bishop. And as he was praying in the church he heard certain of the townsmen and of the pilgrims saying that Santiago was wont to appear in battle like a knight, in aid of the Christians. And when he heard this it nothing pleased him, and he said unto them, 'Friends, call him not a knight, but rather a fisherman.' Upon this it pleased God that he should fall asleep, and in his sleep Santiago appeared to him with a good and cheerful countenance, holding in his hand a bunch of keys, and said unto him, 'Thou thinkest it a fable that they should call me a knight, and sayest that I am not so: for this reason am I come unto thee, that thou mayest never more doubt my knighthood: for a knight of Jesus Christ I am, and a helper of the Christians against the Moors.' While he was thus saying, a horse was brought him, the which was exceeding white, and the Apostle Santiago mounted upon it, being well clad in bright and fair armour, after the manner of a knight. And he said to Estiano, 'I go to help King Don Ferrando, who has lain these seven months before Coimbra, and to-morrow, with these keys which thou seest, I will open the gates of the city unto him at the hour of tierce, and deliver it into his hand.' Having said this, he departed. And the bishop, when he awoke in the morning, called together the clergy and people of Compostella, and told them what he had seen and heard. And as he said, even so did it come to pass; for tidings came on that day, and on the hour of tierce the gates of the city had been opened." *

Patron saints soon succeeded to patron deities. It is said that the statue of Jupiter, which of old presided in the Capitol over the Roman world, is now doing duty as St. Peter in the metropolitan church of Rome. If this be true, it is a cutting satire on the facility with which the passions, the superstitions, and even the rites of Paganism were carried into Christianity by imperfect

* Southey's *Chronicle of the Cid*, Book I. iv.

converts, and confirmed by a corrupted and avaricious priesthood.

While the Athenians were stationed near Marathon, the Platæans marched to their aid with the whole force of their state. The connexion of Platæa with Athens lasted so long, and was maintained with such consistency and good faith, no very common distinction in the politics of Greece, that it is worth while to trace its origin and progress. Platæa, a small state of Bœotia, was originally a member of a federal union formed by the independent cities of that province, over which Thebes, the largest and most powerful of them, presided. The Thebans, however, in every part of their history, seem to have been unsatisfied with influence, and to have endeavoured to exert direct authority over the weaker members of the confederacy. On some such occasion, Cleomenes, the king of Sparta, of whom we have already made mention, happened to be on the spot; and as Lacedæmon was then confessedly the first power of Greece, the Platæans naturally applied to him for assistance, and offered, as Herodotus expresses it, "to give themselves to the Lacedæmonians:" that is to say, to contract that close connexion with Sparta, and own that sort of allegiance to it, by which the weaker states of Greece generally connected themselves with some one of the principal powers. In later times this was generally determined by the interests of the predominant party in the smaller state. If the democratical party was uppermost, it probably connected itself with Athens; if the aristocratical, with Sparta. At the earlier period in question, however, the pre-eminence of Sparta was pretty generally acknowledged, and would, perhaps, have been sufficient to determine the Platæans to seek its protection rather than that of any other state, even independently of the accidental presence of Cleomenes. The Lacedæmonians, however, refused to admit them into the connexion which they wished for. "We live," he said, "at a great distance from you, and ours would be but a cold sort of assistance, for you might be reduced to slavery over and over again before any of us even heard

of it. We advise you, therefore, to give yourselves to the Athenians, who are your neighbours, and besides that are no bad helpmates." The advice was not bad, and may appear not unfriendly. Herodotus, however, gives it a different construction, and one well warranted by the general course of Lacedæmonian policy. "This was the advice of the Lacedæmonians; not so much from any good will to the Platæans, as from the wish to bring the Athenians into trouble by placing them in collision with the Bœotians." The Platæans, however, took the advice, whatever were the motives from which it proceeded. They sent an embassy to Athens at the time that the Athenians were celebrating one of their great public festivals, who took their seats as suppliants at the altar, and "gave" their state to the Athenians. The Thebans immediately marched against Platæa, and the Athenians to its relief. The Corinthians, however, interfered, and, by the consent of both parties, acted as arbitrators between them. In this capacity they traced a boundary between the conflicting states, and decreed that the Thebans were not to interfere with any people situated in Bœotia who did not choose to be members of the Bœotian confederacy. After delivering this judgment the Corinthians went away, and the Athenians, whose work seemed to be done, marched homewards. On their march, however, the Bœotians set upon them, and were very rightly served in being defeated in the battle which ensued. The Athenians considered themselves entitled to profit by their victory, and established a boundary-line more favourable to Platæa than that decreed by the Corinthians. These transactions happened in the year 519 B.C., twenty-nine years before the period of which we are treating. The connexion which had thus begun by an important service rendered by Athens to Platæa, appears to have been strengthened by other acts of assistance; for Herodotus tells us that the Athenians had already undergone repeated toils for them. Whatever these had been, the Platæans nobly performed their part of the obligation. On the present occasion they marched to the aid of Athens with their whole

force; we shall find them, in the next great war with Persia, serving, though an inland people, with their whole force on board the Athenian navy: and in all the contests which continually ravaged Greece, Plataea, as long as it continued a state, faithfully adhered to its ancient protector. At the commencement of the Peloponnesian war, the Athenians, unable effectually to protect so insulated a dependency, removed all its inhabitants, excepting a sufficient garrison, to Athens. The loyalty of the Plataeans to their allegiance was their destruction. In the third year of the war the town was taken by the Lacedæmonians, those who remained in it put to death, the buildings, all except the temples, levelled with the ground, and its lands confiscated by the Theban state.

The Plataean force at Marathon is said to have been 1000 men; but there is no certain account of the armies. No writer rates the Persians at fewer than 100,000 men: the Greeks do not seem to have had more than 15,000* heavy-armed troops, and, according to the usual proportion, at least as many light-armed troops, principally slaves, in attendance on the heavy-armed citizens. Herodotus gives no calculation of the numbers on either side; some writers rate the Persian force very much above, the Athenian very much below those already mentioned; but according to every estimate the Persians had a very alarming superiority in number, and a no less formidable advantage in the general terror which the wide career of their conquests had produced, to such a degree, that, in the forcible expression of Plato, "the minds of all men were enslaved." It is not, therefore, to be wondered that the ten generals were divided in opinion, and that while some, Miltiades was one of them, were for battle, others objected to it, on the ground that their force was too small. The decision finally rested with the polemarch, Callimachus;†

* See Mitford, chap. vii. 4.

† The polemarch was the third in rank of the Archons, and was at the head of the military administration.

and Miltiades succeeded in convincing him of the necessity of fighting, and of fighting at once.

It was the Athenian practice when a council of generals, as in the present instance, was appointed, that each should command for a day in turn. A more inconvenient arrangement could not well be devised, and it furnishes some proof of the simplicity of the military operations of those times, that it was found at all practicable.* On the present occasion, however, its inconvenience was much diminished by the conduct of the generals themselves; for when the concurrence of the polemarch in the opinion of Miltiades had determined its adoption, all the generals who had voted for battle gave up their days of command to Miltiades. According to Plutarch, Aristides was the first to do so, and the account agrees well with his disinterested patriotism: its credit, however, is impaired by the additional statement that all the generals followed his example, for Herodotus, a much better authority, confines the sacrifice to those who had originally wished for an engagement. Miltiades, however, although he accepted the power yielded to him, waited till his regular turn of command came round before he gave the signal for battle.

The scene of action was a narrow plain, bounded by the sea eastward and the hills westward, and closed at the northern side by a marsh, on the southern by mountains sweeping down to the sea. The Athenians were

* A feeling of democratical equality, and the fear of making an individual too powerful, may probably have led to this division of military command at Athens. The absolute equality of the two consuls at Rome produced a similar effect when they both were present in the same army. The battle of Cannæ furnished a memorable example of its danger: after continual discord between Paulus Æmilius and Varro, the latter took advantage of his day of command to give the signal for battle, without even consulting his colleague, an old and experienced soldier: and the result was the delivery of Hannibal from a very critical position by the utter destruction of the Roman army.

ranged in the order of their tribes, beginning from the right wing, where Callimachus, the polemarch, was stationed, a post of honour which he held by virtue of his office.* At the opposite extremity, at the very end of the left wing, were placed the Plataeans, and they did such faithful service that it became the usage of the Athenians at the great feast and assembly which they held every five years, that a herald should make a solemn prayer "for all good both to the Athenians and Plataeans." The great strength of the army was collected in the two wings. They were necessarily distant from each other, that the Persians might not outflank them; and the consequence was that the centre of the line, where Themistocles and Aristides, according to Plutarch, were stationed, was thinly manned, and weaker than any other part of it.

Every great undertaking was preceded, among the Greeks, by sacrifice, less from a feeling of religious obligation than for the auguries to be deduced from the inspection of the victims. These were pronounced favourable, and the Athenians were immediately let loose, and charged the enemy running. The distance between the two armies was not less than eight stadii (about a mile). The Persians therefore prepared to receive the attack, and expected an easy victory; "for they thought it madness in them, and madness of the most deadly kind, thus to charge, few as they were, and those few without cavalry or archery;" two descriptions of force in which they were themselves strongest, and to which, after their long course of success, they naturally attributed peculiar

* In earlier times this had been the post of the king (Eurip., Suppl., 657), and the polemarch, who succeeded in great measure to his military station, retained it. In the same manner, the second archon, who succeeded to the priestly functions of the king, retained the name of king, βασιλεύς; and a similar instance is found in Roman history, where the title of king, *rex*, after it had become odious in political matters, was retained by the priest appointed to perform those sacred rites which the kings themselves had formerly performed.

importance. "But when the Athenians⁷ came to close quarters with the barbarians, they fought right worthily of notice. For they were the first of all the Greeks, as far as we know, who ran to charge the enemy, and they were the first who stood firm when they saw the Median dress, and the men who wore it; for until then it was a terror to the Greeks even to hear the name of the Medians." The battle lasted long, and with various fortune. The best troops of the enemy, the Persians themselves, and the Sacæ,* were opposed to the weak centre of the Athenians, which they broke, and pursued the fliers into the inland country. On each wing, however, the Athenians and Plateans were victorious: and instead of pursuing the enemies to whom they had been opposed, they united, set upon the body who, having broken their centre, were now separated from the rest of the Persian army, and routed them. They then pursued the defeated forces with great slaughter to the sea, where they took to their ships. The conquerors rushed to seize them, and captured seven after a severe struggle, in which was slain Cynægeirus, brother of the poet Æschylus, and of Ameinias, whom we shall find acquiring high distinction at the battle of Salamis. His right hand was severed by the blow of a battle-axe as he grasped the upper part of a vessel's stern,† and endeavoured to detain it; a mode of capture which may furnish some notion of the kind of shipping in use at that time. The anecdote is not striking enough for Justin and other compilers, who add, that when his right hand was struck off, he renewed the grasp with his left, and losing that also, seized the ship with his teeth, and hung upon it to his last breath. The whole Athenian loss is said to have been 192 killed, but among these were Callimachus the polemarch, Stesileos one of the generals, and many other men of name. Of

* A Scythian tribe dwelling at the foot of Mount Imaus, on the confines of Thibet.

† Ἀφλαστὰ, apparently the ornamental finishing of the stern.

the Persians there fell about six thousand four hundred.* The remainder got on board their vessels, and endeavoured to surprise Athens by sailing round Cape Sunium. The vigilance of the Athenians, however, prevented them: they returned to their capital by a forced march, and when the barbarians were in the offing, they found the victorious army encamped and ready to receive them. This was not the purpose of their expedition; and, after a little hesitation, they set sail and returned to Asia. The dead were buried on the field of battle: a vast tumulus was raised over the Athenian citizens, and other monuments were erected to the Plateans and the slaves, who on this emergency were allowed, contrary to Grecian usage, to serve in the heavy-armed foot. The people of Marathon worshipped the slain as heroes. Around their tombs, says Pausanias, is to be heard throughout the night the neighing of horses and the noise of combatants. They have never indeed manifested themselves to those who have gone there purposely to see them, but such as have passed casually, and in ignorance, have met with no token of the anger of the gods.†

Warfare is so well calculated to develop all the energies, and among them some of the virtues of mankind, that its details frequently excite intense interest, even when we see and reprobate most distinctly the thousand evils consequent on an appeal to arms. There is something spirit-stirring in the narrative of personal hardihood, which carries us along in despite of our sober judgment, and enlists our sympathy, often in opposition to the dictates of reason and morality. Few men exist whose blood will not beat higher at a well-devised tale of gallant adventure: much more when the fictions, the extrava-

* For the topography of Marathon, the reader may consult Dr. Clarke's Travels, and Colonel Leake's paper on the Demi of Attica, with advantage. The flying Persians appear to have been entangled and stopped by a narrow pass, formed by a precipitous hill on one side, and a deep morass on the other. Hence this disproportionate slaughter.

† Lib. i. 32. Herod. lib. vi. c. 105, 120.

gances of romance are realized in history. "It is fearful, it is magnificent, to see how the arm and heart of one man may triumph over many." But we can seldom enjoy this pleasure unrestrained by some apprehension that we are indulging the imagination at the expense of the judgment. It is only in cases of clear and unjustifiable oppression, where power has been exerted to the utmost to crush right, where men careless of death in comparison of oppression, weak in numbers, and confident only in the strength of their arms and the goodness of their cause, have met and overthrown the numerous forces of their enemy, that we can fully sympathize with the victor's triumph. These conditions were fulfilled at Marathon. The Persian was the aggressor: he had interfered with the domestic government of the Athenians by endeavouring to force upon them a prince whom they had rejected; he followed up his mandate to restore Hippias by sending into their territory an apparently overwhelming force. A short-sighted policy would have counselled submission: but it never was the interest of a small state to yield tamely to a powerful enemy. Resistance, even if unsuccessful, will cause it to be feared: a prompt submission delivers it over to be trampled upon. The Athenians met their enemy fearlessly, and beat him thoroughly, and they were rewarded for it by obtaining an eminence in war, in literature, in art, and in glory, unequalled and incomparable, considering their population and extent of land. Those more especially who fought and fell in this battle, have their reward in the deathless fame which waits upon their victory. It would be needless and endless to dwell on the testimonies to their deserving which later ages have produced. We shall therefore merely refer to the period of Athenian grandeur to observe, that it was from the Persian wars, and especially from Marathon, the battle which first showed the Persians not invincible, that the vain but high-spirited Athenians drew their most cherished recollections, their orators the themes of panegyric most grateful to the national pride of the assembled people.

In time of war it was customary to solemnize, every

winter, a public funeral at Athens, in honour of those who had fallen in the preceding campaign. The manner of the ceremony was this:—"Having set up a tent, they put into it the bones of the dead three days before the funeral, and every one bringeth whatsoever offerings he thinks good, in honour of his own relations. When the day comes of carrying them to their burial, certain cypress coffins are carried along in carts, for every tribe one, in which are the bones of the men of every tribe by themselves. There is likewise borne an empty hearse covered over, for such as appear not, nor were found among the rest, when they were taken up. The funeral is accompanied by any that will, whether citizen or stranger; and the women of their kindred are also by at the burial, lamenting and mourning. They then put them into a public monument, which standeth in the fairest suburb of the city (in which place they have ever interred all that died in the wars, except those that were slain in the fields of Marathon, who, because their virtue was thought extraordinary, were therefore buried on the spot), and when the earth is thrown over them, some one, thought to exceed the rest in virtue, wisdom, and dignity, chosen by the city, maketh an oration, wherein he giveth them such praises as are fit; which done, the company depart."* Two specimens of this style of oratory, by two of the first names in Grecian literature, remain: the celebrated speech, written by Thucydides, in the name of Pericles, and one ascribed to Socrates by Plato. The reader will not be displeased to see in what terms the Athenian philosopher speaks of his countrymen's deeds in the Persian war.

"Our fathers, and the fathers of these men deceased, and they themselves, being honourably born, and nurtured in all freedom, have individually and as a people done many noble deeds in sight of all men, conceiving that in the cause of freedom it was their duty to fight with Greeks in behalf of Greeks, and with barbarians in behalf of the whole Grecian race. The time would fail

* Thucyd., ii. 34.

me to relate as the subject merits, how they repelled Eumolpus, and the Amazons, and other invaders earlier than those, and how they supported the Argives against the Thebans, and the Heraclidæ against the Argives; and the poets who have hymned their valour in verse, have already made it known to all men. Were I then to attempt to set forth the same things in prose, I should but prove my own inferiority. I will therefore pass these matters, for they already have their due. Those deeds on which, worthy as they are, no poet has yet founded a worthy name, those yet uncelebrated are the theme on which it befits me to dwell, praising them myself, and wooing others to weave them into songs and other poetry, in a manner honourable to the men who acted them. First then of the things which I refer to, the children of this land, our ancestors, checked the Persian, when, at the head of Asia, he was in the act of enslaving Europe; wherefore it is just and fit that we should call them first to mind, and celebrate their valour. He, however, who would praise it fitly, must carry back his mind to that time when all Asia bowed before the third of the Persian kings: the first of whom, Cyrus, having liberated the Persians, his countrymen, by his own high spirit, enslaved their masters, the Medes, and ruled the rest of Asia as far as Egypt. His son, Cambyses, reduced such parts of Egypt and of Libya as were accessible; and the third, Darius, by land extended the boundary of his empire to Scythia, and with his fleet commanded both the sea and the islands, so that no man deemed himself equal to contend with him. The very minds of all men were enslaved, so many, so great, and so warlike nations had the Persian empire subdued.

“Darius accusing us and the Eretrians of the attack on Sardis, on that pretext sent five hundred thousand men in long ships and transports, and three hundred long ships, and ordered Datis, their general, as he would save his head, to bring the Athenians and Eretrians back with him. Datis sailed to Eretria, against men reputed then among the most warlike of the Greeks, not few in number, and overcame them in three days, and carefully

searched their whole land, that none should escape. His soldiers marched to the boundary of the country; they formed a line along it from sea to sea; they joined hands, and thus passed over the whole of it, that they might tell the king that none had escaped.* With the same design they sailed from Eretria to Marathon, as to a ready prey, thinking to carry off the Athenians enyoked with the Eretrians in the same fated evils. These things then being in part accomplished, and the rest in progress, no Greek succoured the Eretrians, none but the Lacedæmonians marched to Athens, and they arrived not till the day after the battle. The rest, stupified with alarm, remained at home, content with present safety. By this a man may appreciate the courage of those who met the power of the barbarians at Marathon, and chastised the insolent presumption of all Asia, and there first erected trophies over the barbarians; becoming thus examples and masters to prove the might of Persia not invincible, and show that all multitude and riches yield to valour. I say then that those men were the fathers not only of our bodies, but of our freedom, and the freedom of all on this mainland; for, by looking to that action, the Greeks took courage to venture other battles for safety, becoming pupils of the men of Marathon. The first prize of valour, then, we must bestow on them: the second on those who fought at Artemisium, and round the Isle of Salamis."†

The battle of Marathon marks an important crisis in the history of Greece, and of the civilized world. The later contests of the Persian war at Thermopylæ and Salamis and Platea, important as they were, were not played for so deep a stake; for the chief of the Grecian nations were then pledged to the war, and were besides encouraged by knowing the Persian power not insuperable. The panegyric of Plato is not overcharged. We have given the frank confession of Herodotus, that up to

* Eubœa is long and very narrow, especially in the southern part, where Eretria was.

† Plato, Menexenus, § 8, 9, 10.

that time the very name of the Medes was a terror to the Greeks; and if the Athenians had yielded to this panic, or had been defeated, European as well as Asiatic Greece would probably have become a province of the Persian empire. The contest, therefore, was that of liberty against despotism; of mental activity against the unimproving and unreflecting apathy in which the greatest part of Asia has slept, from the commencement of history; and a more important object has never been at hazard, unless where the cause of religion has depended on an appeal to arms.

Christianity is now so closely connected with the idea of superiority in knowledge, wealth, and war, that many readers may be surprised to hear of its having been seriously endangered by an external enemy since its first triumph and establishment. To our ancestors, however, the unparalleled rapidity and success with which the followers of Mahomet extended their religion and their empire, was a subject of serious and just alarm. Within fifty years of the prophet's expulsion from Mecca, Constantinople itself, the metropolis of the Christian world, was besieged by the Caliph, the successor to his temporal authority: within a hundred years the Saracenic empire extended from the confines of India to the Pyrenees. In the year 714, scarcely three years from the first invasion of Spain, Musa, the victorious lieutenant of the Caliph, prepared to pass that mountain barrier, to extinguish the kingdoms of the Franks and Lombards, and to preach the doctrines of Mahomet in the church of the Vatican. He proposed to conquer the barbarians of Germany, to follow the Danube to the Euxine Sea, to overthrow the Constantinopolitan empire, and thus unite the eastern and western dominions of the Saracens. His ambitious progress was checked and himself recalled by the jealousy of his master; but in the year 731 Abderahman resumed the bold projects of his predecessor. Gascony and Languedoc were already subject to the sovereign of Damascus, when, in 732, that enterprising soldier led a vast army to complete the subjection of France. He

had already advanced unchecked to the banks of the Loire, when Charles Martel, the mayor of the palace, in name a household officer, but in authority the sovereign of France, collected his forces, and advanced to the deliverance of Europe. For six days the armies confronted each other, making trial of each other's strength in skirmishes: on the seventh, one Saturday in the month of October, 732, the final battle, that of Tours,* took place which was to decide whether Europe should remain Christian, or the Cross sink under the Crescent. The light and active Saracens, whose defensive armour was merely a quilted jacket, and their weapons arrows and javelins, rushed fiercely to the attack; but they made little impression on the solid battalions of the Franks, bristling with spear-points, and protected by their close-locked shields. The latter were no match for their assailants in agility of manœuvring, but the weighty arm and steady foot made up for this deficiency. The Saracen cavalry charged up to their ranks in vain; they were compelled to rein their horses round, and when wearied and broken by their fruitless efforts, the Christians advanced and routed them with great slaughter. In the heat of the battle, Eudes, Duke of Aquitaine, led his troops round upon the enemy's camp, overthrowing all before him, and contributed greatly to the victory by the tumult and confusion thus produced. "Then was Charles first called by the name of Martel (*a sort of battle-axe*); for as the martel crushes iron, steel, and all other metals, even so he broke and pounded his enemies and all other nations. Great wonder was it that, of all his host, he lost in this battle only 1500 persons."† Abderahman sought in vain to rally his troops, and fell while fighting valiantly. Night separated the armies, and the Infidels profited by it to retreat, leaving their camp, their furniture, and their booty at the disposal of the victor. Charles did not pursue them, from which we may infer

* This battle is usually so called, though it is said to have been fought near Poitiers. The exact locality is by no means certain.

† Croniques de St. Denys, liv. v. 26.

that his own loss was severe. This disaster terminated the course of Arab conquest.

Contemporary authors have preserved scarcely any particulars of this battle; it is not till the close of the century that Paulus Diaconus, the Lombard historian, informs us that 375,000 Saracens were left dead on the field, their whole number being estimated by later authors at about 80,000. It is singular that, of the Frankish annalists, almost all content themselves with the bare statement that, in 732, a great battle was fought between the Saracens and Charles Martel: none pretend to give any circumstantial account of an occurrence so gratifying to national pride. Were our information fuller, the method of warfare adopted by the French in that age, and the difference between the European and Asiatic arms and tactics, would form interesting subjects for illustration. One thing we learn—that the French fought chiefly on foot, and were inexpert in the mounted service, and trusted little to their cavalry; from which it is evident that the usages of knighthood had made little progress at this period. In the want of this information we give a passage, in which the features of Christian and Moorish warfare, in a later age, are described with much spirit and minuteness by a contemporary author. Though not very closely connected with the subject, it is worth attention for its poetical merits, and is besides somewhat of a literary curiosity, being taken from the oldest narrative poem, as we believe, preserved in any living language. We speak of the “*Poëma del Cid*,” the history of the celebrated Ruy Diaz of Bivar, generally known by the name given to him by the Moors of Cid, or Lord; which is thus spoken of by Mr. Southey: “Sanchez is of opinion that it was composed about the middle of the twelfth century, some fifty years after the death of the Cid; there are some passages which induce me to believe it the work of a contemporary. Be that as it may, it is unquestionably the oldest poem in the Spanish language. In my judgment it is as decidedly, and beyond comparison, the finest.”*

* Preface to the Chronicle of the Cid.

The translation here given is placed, without the name of the author, in the Appendix to the Chronicle of the Cid. "I have never," says the same high authority, "seen any other translation which so perfectly represented the manner, character, and spirit of the original." The subject of the passage is briefly this: the Cid being driven into banishment by the intrigues of his enemies, is accompanied by several of his friends and followers, for whom he undertakes to provide by carrying on a predatory warfare against the Moors. In the course of their adventures they surprise the castle of Alcoar, but are soon after surrounded and besieged by a superior army. After some difference of opinion, the Cid yields to the wishes of his followers, and determines on a sally, which is successful.

"They fain would sally forth, but he, the noble Cid,
Accounted it as rashness, and constantly forbid.
The fourth week was beginning, the third already past,
The Cid and his companions they are now agreed at last.
'The water is cut off, the bread is well nigh spent;
To allow us to depart by night the Moors will not consent.
To combat with them in the field our numbers are but few,
Gentlemen, tell me your minds, what do you think to do?'
Minaya Alvar Fanez answered him again:
'We are come here from fair Castile to live like banished
men;
There are here six hundred of us, besides some nine or ten;
It is by fighting with the Moors that we have earned our
bread;
In the name of God, that made us, let nothing more be said.
Let us sally forth upon them by the dawn of day.'
The Cid replied, 'Minaya, I approve of what you say;
You have spoken for the best, and had done so without doubt.'
The Moors that were within the town they took and turned
them out,
That none should know their secret: they laboured all that
night;
They were ready for the combat with the morning light.
The Cid was in his armour, mounted at their head—
He spoke aloud among them—you shall hear the words he
said:
'We all must sally forth! There can not a man be spared,
Two footmen only at the gates to close them and keep guard;

If we are slain in battle, they will bury us here in peace—
If we survive and conquer, our riches will increase.
And you, Pero Bermuez, the standard you must bear—
Advance it like a valiant man, comely and fair ;
But do not venture forward before I give command.'
Bermuez took the standard ; he went and kissed his hand.
The gates were then thrown open, and forth at once they
rushed ;
The outposts of the Moorish host, back to the camp were
pushed ;
The camp was all in tumult, and there was such a thunder
Of cymbals and of drums, as if earth would cleave in sunder.
There you might see the Moors arming themselves in haste,
And the two main battles how they were forming fast ;
Horsemen and footmen mixed, a countless troop and vast.
The Moors are moving forward—the battle soon must join :
' My men, stand here in order, ranged upon a line :
Let not a man stir from his rank before I give the sign !'
Pero Bermuez heard the word, but he could not refrain,
He held the banner in his hand, he gave his horse the rein ;
' You see yon foremost squadron there, the thickest of the
foes,
Noble Cid, God be your aid, for there your banner goes !
Let him that serves and honours it, show the duty that he
owes.'
Earnestly the Cid called out, ' For heaven's sake be still !'
Bermuez cried, ' I cannot hold ; ' so eager was his will.
He spurred his horse and drove him on amid the Moorish rout,
They strove to win the banner, and compassed him about :
Had not his armour been so true, he had lost either life or
limb.
The Cid cried out again, ' For heaven's sake succour him !'
" Their shields before their breasts, forth at once they go,
Their lances in the rest, levelled fair and low ;
Their banners and their crests waving in a row,
Their heads all stooping down toward the saddle bow.
The Cid was in the midst, his shout was heard afar,
' I am Ruy Diaz, the champion of Bivar ;
Strike among them, gentlemen, for sweet mercies' sake !'
There where Bermuez fought, amidst the foe they break ;
Three hundred bannered knights, it was a gallant show :
Three hundred Moors they killed, a man with every blow.
When they wheeled and turned, as many more lay slain,
You might see them raise their lances, and level them again,

There you might see the breast-plates, how they were cleft
in twain,

And many a Moorish shield lie shattered on the plain,
The pennons that were white marked with a crimson stain,
The horses running wild whose riders had been slain.
The Christians call upon St. James, the Moors upon Mahound.
There were thirteen hundred of them slain on a little spot of
ground.

Minaya Alvar Fanez smote with all his might,
He went as he was wont, and was foremost in the fight.
There was Galin Garcia, of courage firm and clear,
Felez Munioz, the Cid's own cousin dear ;
Antolinez of Burgos, a hardy knight and keen,
Munio Gustioz, his pupil that had been.
The Cid on his gilded saddle above them all was seen.
There was Martin Munioz, that ruled in Montmayor,
There were Alvar Ferez and Alvar Salvador :
These were the followers of the Cid, with many others more,
In rescue of Bermuez, and the standard that he bore.
Minaya is dismounted, his courser has been slain,
He fights upon his feet, and smites with might and main.
The Cid came in all haste to help him to horse again ;
He saw a Moor well mounted, thereof he was full fain,
Through the girdle at a stroke he cast him to the plain :
He called to Minaya Fanez, and reached him out the rein,
'Mount and ride, Minaya, you are my right hand,
We shall have need of you to-day, these Moors will not
disband.'

Minaya leapt upon the horse, his sword was in his hand,
Nothing that came near him could resist him or withstand ;
All that falls within his reach he dispatches as he goes.
The Cid rode to King Fariz, and struck at him three blows ;
The third was far the best, it forced the blood to flow,
The stream ran from his side, and stained his arms below ;
The King caught round the rein, and turned his back to go,
The Cid has won the battle with that single blow."

The battle of Tours delivered Europe from the dread
of Mahometan invasion from the West, and a few
Spaniards sheltered in the mountains of Asturias suc-
ceeded ere long in erecting an independent kingdom,
and ultimately in wresting the whole Peninsula from
the Moors. But the recovery of what had been lost in
two campaigns occupied near seven centuries of the most

inveterate and destructive warfare, in which the international hatred displayed of old between Greek and barbarian was revived, and further embittered by religious hatred. "And what a warfare! it was to burn the standing corn, to root up the vine and the olive, to hang the heads of their enemies from the saddle bow, and drive mothers and children before them with the lance; to massacre the men of a town in the fury of assault; to select the chiefs that they might be murdered in cold blood; to reserve the women for violation and the children for slavery; and this warfare year after year, till they rested from mere exhaustion. The soldiers of Ferran Gonzalez complained that they led a life like devils: 'Our Lord,' said they, 'is like Satan, and we are like his servants, whose whole delight is in separating soul from body.' "* Meanwhile the struggle between the Cross and the Crescent was proceeding in the East with very different success, and before the surrender of Granada, the end of Moorish independence in Spain, the Ottoman empire was established in the south of Europe, and the city of Constantine acknowledged the divine mission of Mahomet. The Crescent has long been waning, never again, as far as human foresight can extend, to refill its horns; and in the present impotence of all Mahometan courts, and the apathy of their subjects, we seek in vain the resemblance of the mighty princes, and the fiery soldiery, whose enthusiasm operated the most sudden and extensive changes related in history. Tribe after tribe have swept each other from the plains of Asia, and with various success have carried their arms and their religion into Europe; and now the empire founded by the last of them in its decrepitude depends for its existence upon its Christian allies. Yet it is not a century and a half since the frontier of Germany was the scene of continual warfare; and since the utmost exertions of the warlike inhabitants of Poland and Hungary could scarcely

* Introduction to Chronicle of the Cid.

restrain the Turks from forcing their way into the heart of Europe, or preserve the capital of the Western from the fate experienced by the capital of the Eastern Empire. Vienna has been twice besieged by a Turkish army, and even so recently as the year 1683 owed her deliverance, when abandoned by her sovereign and in the extremity of distress, to the military talents of Sobieski, King of Poland, and the bravery of his subjects. The celebrated battle fought under the very walls of that capital is memorable as having finally delivered Europe from all fear of the Mahometan powers. Austria, since that period, has but ill discharged the debt of gratitude which she contracted under the walls of Vienna!

Encouraged and assisted by a revolt in Hungary, Kara Mustapha, the Grand Vizir of Turkey, burst into that kingdom at the head of 200,000 men, drove back such troops as the imperial general, the Duke of Lorraine, was able to collect, and, crossing the Danube, forced his way to Vienna, then sufficiently ill fortified, and ill prepared for a siege. Leopold, the reigning emperor of Germany, anticipating this storm, had obtained a promise of succours from the Diet of the empire, and concluded a subsidiary treaty with Sobieski for an army of 46,000 men. But the Germans were slow, and before they could be assembled Vienna was besieged. Leopold quitted his capital, and absented himself from the struggle to be made in defence of his hereditary dominions.

Tuln, situated on the Danube, about five leagues above Vienna, was appointed as the place of meeting for the armies. Sobieski, pressed to hasten by the imperial general, executed a forced march, accompanied only by a body of cavalry, and on his arrival had the mortification to find the imperial forces not yet arrived. The armies were at length united, but not before Vienna was reduced to extremity, and, indeed, nothing could have preserved it but the stupid security of the Turkish Vizir, who, with his vast numbers, suffered a very inferior force to construct a bridge over the Danube within five leagues of his camp, and delayed to assault a breached, half-garri-

soned, and defenceless town, in hope that it would surrender by capitulation, and that its riches would thus be preserved entire for the general instead of being placed at the disposal of the soldiery. These errors led doubly to his ruin, by at once enraging and dispiriting his own soldiers, and by granting opportunity and a precious delay to the enemy. Still the allied troops were separated from Vienna by five leagues of mountain road, and though their junction was completed on the 7th of September, it was not until the 11th that the difficulties of the march were overcome, though it was pressed so eagerly that the Germans abandoned their cannon, and the Poles alone brought artillery into the field of battle.

On the 11th they reached the last mountain on their route, named the Calembourg. There was yet time for the Vizir to repair his blunders, by merely taking possession of this height and occupying the passes, which must have stopped the Christian army at least long enough to give time for a final and successful assault. He neglected this, and the janissaries, out of patience at these repeated proofs of incapacity, exclaimed, "Come on, infidels, the very sight of your hats will make us fly."

"On reaching this eminence, so fortunately unoccupied, an hour before night-fall, the Christians saw one of the noblest and most terrific exhibitions of human power; a vast plain and the islands in the Danube covered with tents, whose splendour suggested the idea of a festive encampment rather than the severity of war; a countless multitude of horses, camels, and buffalos; two hundred thousand combatants in movement; swarms of Tartars who hovered round the foot of the mountain in their usual disorder; the dreadful fire of the besiegers, to which the besieged replied as warmly as they could; and a mighty city, of which the steeple tops alone were distinguishable across the fire and smoke which overhung it.

"The besieged were apprised by signal of the coming succour. Men must have suffered all the extremities of a long siege, must have seen themselves and their families destined to perish by the sword, or live in slavery in a

heathen land, to appreciate the joy which Vienna felt, a joy soon checked by returning fear. Kara Mustapha with such an army might still expect success which he did not deserve. Sobieski, on viewing his dispositions, observed to the German generals, 'This man is ill encamped, we shall beat him.' The next day, Sept. 12, 1683, was to determine whether Vienna, under Mahomet IV., should experience the fate of Constantinople under Mahomet II., and whether the empire of the West would be re-united to the empire of the East; perhaps, even, whether Europe should continue Christian or not.

"Two hours before dawn the King of Poland and most of the generals received the sacrament, the Turks meanwhile performing their devotions, with cries of 'Allah, Allah!' shouts which were redoubled at sunrise, when the Christian army descended in close array, with slow and even steps, the cannon in front, and stopping every thirty or forty paces to fire and recharge. Their front was widened as they had room to enlarge it, while the Turks, in much confusion, viewed their enemy. It was then the Khan of the Tartars pointed out to the Vizir the pennoned lances of the Polish household cavalry, observing, 'The king is at their head,' words which much troubled him.

"Immediately after ordering the Tartars to put to death all their prisoners, 30,000 in number, a butchery worthy such a chief, he gave command to march toward the mountain, and at the same time make a general attack upon the city. The latter order came too late: the besieged had recovered courage, and the irritated janissaries had lost theirs.

"Meanwhile the Christians continued to descend, and the Turks advanced towards them. The battle began. The first line of the Christians, entirely composed of infantry, charged with such impetuosity, that it cleared the way for a line of cavalry which took its station in the intervals between the battalions. The king, the princes and generals advanced to the front, now fighting with the infantry, now with the cavalry; while the artillery

fired langridge at very small distance. The scene of the first encounter was broken by vineyards, elevations, and small hollows, at the entrance of which the enemy had left his own guns, and he suffered severely from those of the Christians. The combatants spread over this uneven ground, fought obstinately till noon; when the Comte de Maligni, brother to the King of Poland, established himself on a hill which commanded the Turkish flank; and they, driven from height to height, retreated into the plain, keeping along their entrenchments.*

* A much more spirited and somewhat different account of the close of the battle is given from Salvandy, *Histoire de Pologne*, in the *Foreign Quarterly Review*, No. 14. We quote from the *Review*, not having been able to procure the original.

"Five o'clock P.M. had sounded, and Sobieski had given up for the day all hope of the grand struggle, when the provoking composure of Kara Mustapha, whom he espied in a splendid tent tranquilly taking coffee with his two sons, roused him to such a pitch that he instantly gave orders for a general assault. It was made simultaneously on the wings and centre. He made towards the Pacha's tent, bearing down all opposition, and repeating with a loud voice, '*Non nobis, non nobis, Domine Exercitium, sed nomini tuo da gloriam!*' 'Not unto us, Lord God of Hosts, not unto us, but unto thy name give the praise!' He was soon recognised by Tartar and Cossack, who had so often beheld him blazing in the view of the Polish chivalry; they drew back, while his name rapidly passed from one extremity to the other of the Ottoman lines, to the dismay of those who had refused to believe him present. '*Allah!*' said the Tartar Khan, '*but the wizard^a is with them sure enough!*' At that moment the hussars, raising their national cry of '*God for Poland!*' cleared a ditch which would long have arrested the infantry, and dashed into the deep ranks of the enemy. They were a gallant band; their appearance almost justified the saying of one of their kings, '*that if the sky itself were to fall, they would bear it up on the points of their lances.*'

^a The name given him by the Tartars, after a series of extraordinary victories had fully impressed them with a belief in his supernatural powers.

The whole army, and especially the left wing, highly inspirited, and shouting victory, wished to press on the retreating enemy without intermission: but the king checked this ardour, which he considered dangerous. The German cavalry was heavily mounted, and their horses would soon have been blown in the extent of plain which was to be crossed. Another and a stronger reason was, that the great inequalities of ground had entirely broken the order of battle. Some time was allowed to re-establish it; and the plain then became the theatre of a triumph which posterity will scarcely believe. Seventy thousand men rushed to encounter two hundred thousand. In the Turkish army, the Pacha of Diarbekir commanded the right, the Pacha of Buda the left wing; the Vizir was in the centre, with the Aga of the Janissaries, and the general of the Spahis.

"The armies remained motionless for a while; the Christians in silence, the Turks redoubling their cries to the clang of trumpets. At that awful moment, a red flag rose in the centre of the infidels, and beside it the great standard of Mahomet, hallowed by the Mussulman creed. This charm, which at other times has given as much courage to those who fought under it, as the truth of their cause to the Christians, did not play its part now: the Vizir had deprived it of its efficacy.

"Sobieski gave the word to charge: the Polish cavalry sword in hand bore right upon the Vizir, whose station was pointed out by the standard. They dashed in the enemy's foremost ranks, and penetrated to the numerous squadrons which surrounded him. None but the Spahis

The shock was rude, and for some minutes dreadful; but the valour of the Poles, still more the reputation of their leader, and more than all, the finger of God, routed these immense hosts; they gave way on every side, the Khan was borne along with the stream to the tent of the now despairing Vizir. 'Canst not thou help me?' said Kara Mustapha to the brave Tartar, 'then I am lost indeed!' 'The Polish king is there!' replied the other, 'I know him well. Did I not tell thee that all we had to do was to get away as quick as possible?'—*Foreign Quarterly Review*, No. xiv. p. 511.

disputed the victory; the rest, Walachians, Transylvanians, Moldavians, Tartars, even the Janissaries, showed no good will to the cause, the result of that hatred and contempt of their general which all felt. He would have re-established their confidence by showing kindness and courage; it was then too late. He addressed the Pacha of Buda, and other chiefs; they kept silence in despair. 'And you,' he said to the Tartarian chief, 'will not you help me?' The Khan replied that he knew the King of Poland, and that there was no safety with him but in flight, of which he immediately set the example. The Spahis were now in extremity. The Poles broke and overthrew them, the grand standard disappeared, and the Vizir ran away and communicated his own fears to all. The dismay spread rapidly to the wings, which were assailed at once by the various nations of the Christian army, the king animating all by his example and his orders. Terror took away all thought and power from this multitude of Turks, who, in so large a plain, ought under an able leader to have surrounded and smothered up their enemies; and but for night, the rout would have been complete; as it was, the result was only a precipitate retreat.

"Sobieski turned rapidly against the janissaries who remained in the works of the besiegers. They had disappeared, however, and Vienna was free. The conquering soldiery wished to rush into the Turkish camp, in which vast treasures had been abandoned,—a dangerous temptation while there remained a chance of the enemy's rallying and returning under cover of the darkness: and to prevent this hazard the troops were ordered to remain under arms all night on pain of death. The Duke of Lorraine wished for an immediate pursuit, but the king declined it; a step which the length of the previous march, the fatigue of the battle, and the want of baggage, which had all been left behind, and would not arrive for three days, may justify. His enemies, however, have not hesitated to assert that the choice of the plunder had some influence on his calculations.

"At six o'clock in the morning the Turkish camp

was thrown open, but the avidity of the soldiers was checked by a dreadful sight: women every where lay slaughtered on the ground, some with their infants yet clinging to them. These were of a class very different from the camp followers of a Christian army. The Turks had slain their wives rather than suffer them to fall into the hands of the enemy. The children they had spared, and five or six hundred were collected and brought up in the Christian faith by the Bishop of Neustadt. A vast booty rewarded the victors, for the Turks, economical in peace, were magnificent in war, and rich armour, valuable dresses and furniture, and splendid tents were found in abundance; and a crowd of merchants were there who had converted the camp into a mart for all the luxury of Asia. A golden stirrup which the Vizir had lost was brought to Sobieski. 'Carry it to the queen,' he said, 'and tell her, that he to whom it belonged is vanquished.' One striking circumstance occurred amid the general misbehaviour of the Turks. Twenty-three janissaries were left in charge of the Vizir's magazines, which were lodged in a villa belonging to the Emperor. They fled not with the rest, and were found there on the 14th, two days after the battle, when they slew those who first attempted to force the place, and only surrendered to the king in person, retaining their arms and baggage."*

There is extant an original letter from Sobieski to his queen, on the evening after the battle, which cannot but be interesting.

"From the Vizir's Tent, Midnight, Sept. 13.

"Only joy of my soul, charming and well-beloved Mariette!

"God be for ever praised! He has given our nation the victory—a triumph such as past ages have never beheld. All the artillery, the whole camp of the Mussulmans, with infinite riches, are become our prey. The approaches toward the city, the fields around us, are covered with the dead infidels, and the survivors flee in

* *Histoire de Jean Sobieski, par l'Abbé Coyer, liv. vi.*

consternation. Every moment our men bring in camels, mules, and sheep, which belonged to the enemy, besides a multitude of prisoners. We have also a great number of deserters, mostly renegades, well equipped and mounted. The victory has been so sudden and extraordinary, that both in the city and our camp the alarm did not all at once subside; every instant the enemy's return was dreaded. In powder and ammunition he has left us the value of a million florins.

"This very night I have witnessed a spectacle which I had long desired to see. Our baggage-train set fire to the powder in several places; the explosion resembled the judgment day, but no one was hurt. On this occasion I remarked how clouds are formed in the atmosphere. But, after all, it is a bad job; there is above half a million lost.

"The Vizir in his flight has abandoned every thing, all but his horse and the dress he wore. I am his heir; the greater portion of his riches has become mine.

"As I advanced with the first line, driving the Vizir before me, I met one of his domestics, who conducted me to his private tents; they occupy a space equal in extent to Warsaw or Leopold. I have obtained all the ensigns and decorations usually borne before him. As to the great standard of Mahomet, which his sovereign had confided to him, I have sent it to the Holy Father by Talenti. We have also rich tents, superb equipages, and a thousand fanciful things, equally fine and valuable. I have not yet seen every thing, but what I have seen is beyond comparison superior to what we found at Kotzim. Here are four or five quivers, mounted with rubies and sapphires, which alone are worth many thousands of ducats. So, my life, you cannot say to me what Tartar women say to their husbands who return without booty, 'Thou art no warrior, for thou hast brought me nothing; none but the foremost in battle ever gain anything.'"

After speaking of other trophies, he continues:

"To-day I have visited the capital; it could not have held out more than five days longer. The imperial

palace is full of holes made by the balls; these immense bastions, full of crevices and half fallen in, look frightful.

"All the imperial troops have done their duty well; they ascribe the victory to God and us. The moment the enemy gave way (and the chief struggle was where I stationed myself opposite the Vizir), all the cavalry of their army rode up to me at the right wing, the centre and left having little to do; among them were the Elector of Bavaria, the Prince of Waldeck, &c. They embraced me, kissed my cheek; the generals saluted my hands and feet; soldiers and officers, on foot and horseback, exclaimed, 'Ah, unser brave könig;' (*Ah, our brave king!*) All obeyed me even better than my own soldiers. . . . The name of Saviour, as well as embraces, has been given me. I have been in two churches where the people kissed my hands, feet, clothes; others at a greater distance cried out, 'Let us kiss your victorious hands.'

"To-day we follow up the pursuit into Hungary; the Electors say they will accompany me."*

"The day after the battle the Comte de Stahrenberg, the governor of Vienna, came to salute its deliverer. The hero thought he might enjoy his triumph without offending the Emperor, and entered by the breaches amid cries of joy. His horse could scarcely pierce the crowd which contended to kiss his feet, to address him as their father, their preserver, and the greatest of princes. Vienna at that moment forgot that she had a jealous master. The gratitude of these unfortunates, and the pleasure of having delivered them, melted Sobieski to tears; and he declared that a throne had nothing equally flattering. Shouts of delight brought him to the cathedral, where he wished to pay his thanks to the God of battles. He perceived on the building a monument of

* Foreign Quarterly Review, No. xiv. *Lettres du Roi de Pologne, Jean Sobieski, à la Reine Marie Casimire, pendant la Campagne de Vienne; par N. A. de Salvandy.*

infamy: it was the Crescent, which Soliman the Great had caused to be placed there, as the condition on which he raised a former siege, which it was inconvenient to prosecute; this he caused to be thrown down, and it was trodden under foot by the people. The *Te Deum* was then chanted, the King himself leading the choir. No magistrate, and few of the leading men of the city, assisted at this ceremony; the people only were free enough from political restraint to join in the praise of God, and in thanking the victor. The preacher chose for his text these words, 'There was a man sent by God, whose name was John.' The application had already been made by Pope Pius V. after the battle of Lepanto, in which Don John of Austria defeated the Sultan Selim. There was however a vast difference between the two battles, for Christianity derived little advantage from that of Lepanto, while that of Vienna saved the German empire, and perhaps the Christian religion. Vienna converted into a Mahometan city, it is impossible to say where the progress of the Crescent would have stopped.

"The Emperor was much hurt at the demonstrations of gratitude offered to the King of Poland, all of which seemed tacit reproaches to himself for abandoning his own city to the protection of another. He endeavoured to conceal his disgust and ingratitude under the veil of etiquette; and an important question was raised, as to the manner in which an Emperor of Germany should receive one of his Electors. The brave Duke of Lorraine said, 'With open arms, if he has saved the empire;' but the Emperor was in no humour for such cordiality. It was arranged ultimately that the sovereigns should meet on horseback in the open country. Sobieski was at the head of his troops, magnificently armed; the Emperor came plainly dressed and attended by his court, and commenced the interview by haranguing upon the services which the Poles had in all times received from the friendship and protection of the Emperors. At last he let fall some slight expression of gratitude for the deliverance of Vienna. The King said, as he turned

his horse away, 'My brother, I am very glad to have done you this little service,'* and concluded the conversation by causing his army to defile before the Emperor."†

Leopold's ingratitude was not confined to words. The promises and pledges which had been lavished to induce Sobieski to march to the relief of Vienna, were broken and neglected after the service had been rendered; and even worse than this, the Emperor refused to supply the Poles with provisions and beasts of burthen when proceeding to fight his own battles in Hungary. Sobieski recovered that kingdom which had been promised to him if he expelled the infidels, but he recovered it not for himself, but the Emperor. On October 12, a second victory, which he characterized as greater than that of Vienna, delivered it finally from the Ottoman yoke. The rejoicing of the Christian world was universal when the result of the campaign was known; for all, Catholic and Protestant, had been alike alarmed at the rapid and overpowering advance of the Turkish force. At Rome the rejoicings continued for a month, and the standard of the Prophet was borne in triumph from church to church, and from convent to convent, as the most glorious signal of the defeat and humiliation of the false religion.

It is melancholy to reflect that the close of this great man's life was embittered by a factious nobility, an intriguing wife, and domestic discords. "Sick of the court, he fled into the forests, or wandered from one castle to another, or pitched his tent wherever a beautiful valley, picturesque landscapes, the mountain torrent, or any natural object attracted his attention. Sick, too, of the world, he sought for consolation in religion and philosophy. There might be something of pedantry in his manners, but he was sincerely attached to letters. He not only cultivated them with assiduity himself, but

* "Mon frère, je suis bien aise de vous avoir rendu ce petit service."

† Histoire de Jean Sobieski, par l'Abbé Coyer, liv. vi.

recommended the study of them to others, and patronized all who excelled in them.

“At length the end of this great man approached. The immediate cause of his death is wrapped in mystery. He had been recommended to take a strong dose of mercury (his infirmities for some time had been neither few nor light) : was it too strong for his constitution to support ? so at least some thought ; so even he appeared to suspect.”* He died on the double anniversary of his birth and his accession to the throne, twenty-three years after the latter event, in 1697, in the 68th year of his age ; and by a singular coincidence, his birth and death were each signalized by a tempest of uncommon and fearful violence.

One might suppose that the spirit of Leopold had descended on all Austrian statesmen. Within a century of the triumphal entry of Sobieski into Vienna, Poland ceased to be an independent kingdom, and the co-operation of Austria was rewarded with a third of her spoils. It seems vain to expect gratitude in international dealings ; yet we might almost have supposed that the recollection of the deliverance of Vienna would have deterred Austria from sharing in so unprovoked and profligate an injustice. The situation and the policy of Europe have altered strangely since the period of which we speak. Poland has fallen before the arms of Russia, and Turkey preserves a precarious independence only by the policy of Christian powers, the supine witnesses or interested sharers in the spoliation of a Christian kingdom, which, having been the bulwark of Europe against Turkey as long as Turkey was formidable, would have formed an equally effectual barrier against the encroachments of Russia.

There is another class of battles, from which the reader will expect some to be selected for comparison with the great events of the Persian war ; those memorable struggles in which a disparity of force which seemed

* Foreign Quarterly, No. xiv. p. 517.

to make resistance hopeless, has not deterred an invaded people from asserting its independence, nor secured the invader from total defeat. Among them the long series of battles by which the freedom of Switzerland was ascertained and secured claims a foremost place; and we are led to take our examples thence, rather than from other history, by a resemblance, perhaps not more than superficial, between the circumstances of the Cantons and of the Greek republics. In either case it was the same class who fought: the Swiss, like the Grecian armies, were composed not of mercenary men at arms, nor vassals bound to follow their lord in public or in private quarrel; but of citizens trained to the use of arms, and habituated to consider military service as a privilege. Among them none pleaded birth or wealth as excuses for not serving in the ranks, or disdained to fight except as the commander of others. We may also notice, that since the time of Charlemagne the infantry service had generally fallen into disrepute and neglect,* and the strength of armies was estimated by their heavy-armed cavalry, the only capacity in which a knight or noble would condescend to serve. As the Athenians were the first Greeks who

* This observation does not apply to Britain. The English archery were celebrated long before this period: they however were merely auxiliary, and were always supported by a strong body of men-at-arms. The strength of a Scottish army consisted of pikemen, who, when formed in close order, generally circular, often resisted the utmost efforts of the English cavalry. The cause of this deviation from the general usage was probably the poverty of the nation; the nobility could not afford to maintain large bodies of horsemen. We may observe that though Wallace was a knight, he appears always to have fought on foot; at least we have met with no passage, either in the Chronicles or in Blind Harry, which represents him mounted. Bruce, on the other hand, was an adept in the arms and exercises of chivalry, and ranked, by the confession of the English, as the third best knight in Europe, though far inferior to Wallace in personal strength.

endured the sight of the Median dress, and the men who wore it, so the Swiss were the first infantry who dared unsupported to abide the furious charge of the high-born and high-spirited nobility. Here the nature of their country was a valuable auxiliary; and the brilliant successes which they wrought, partly by advantage of ground, but chiefly by their courage, strength, and constancy, aided by a real though not apparent superiority in arms and discipline, led, in conjunction with the invention of gunpowder, to a revolution in war, and re-established the infantry service in its due superiority.

From a number of battles almost equally worthy of our attention, we select two—those fought at Morgarten and Sempach. That of Morgarten claims our notice as the first of the series, and as that in which the disproportion of the combatants is most striking. We take our account from a contemporary chronicler, whose father was a soldier in the Austrian army. The writer's prejudices are obvious; still he is honest enough to let it appear that the Swiss had done all that was consistent with honour and independence to avoid a war. The parties were, on the one side, the whole power of Austria, on the other the three Waldstetten, or Forest Cantons (with which Lucern was afterwards associated as a fourth), Schwitz, Uri, and Unterwalden. The pretended ground of invasion was a quarrel between these mountaineers and the wealthy and powerful Abbey of Einsiedlen, which solicited the Duke of Austria's assistance: the real ground is to be found in that prince's jealousy of the principles of liberty asserted by the Swiss, and recently acted on by Tell and his confederates.

“ In the year of our Lord 1315, a rural tribe of certain valleys begirt with high mountains, called Schwitz, revolted from its allegiance, trusting in those mountains as its firmest bulwark, and withheld the tribute and service due to Duke Leopold; who being much angered, collected an army of 20,000 men, select soldiers, most skilful and bold in battle, to overcome, spoil, and subdue

those rebel mountaineers. Therefore these soldiers met, as of one accord, to tame and humble the rustics, and, making very sure of the victory, and of the spoil and plunder of the land, they took ropes and halters to lead them away bound among their flocks and herds. The Schwitzers, hearing all this, were in much dread, and fortified the weaker passes into their country with walls and trenches, and commended themselves to God with prayers, fasting, and processions. Moreover they gave charge to various persons to go to the mountain paths, by which there was a way into their land, and there keep watch in the narrow straits. And all was done as had been ordered, and the whole people cried to God with much earnestness, and humbled their souls in fasting, men and women, and besought God with one voice that their herds might not be given as a prey, nor their wives as a booty, nor their homes be made a desolation, nor their honour and virtue a pollution. Therefore they prayed the Lord with their whole heart, that he would visit his people, saying, ' Lord God of heaven and earth, behold these men's pride, and have regard to our lowliness, and show that thou desertest not those who trust in thee, and humblest whosoever trusteth in himself, and boasteth his own valour.' Then, repenting of their contumacy, they sought peace through the mediation of the Count of Toggenburg; but Duke Leopold was too much angered to receive their submission, and would hear of nothing but treading them under foot, and scattering them and their goods. So the Schwitzers took arms, and posted themselves in the narrow passes, and watched there day and night."

Owing to the necessity of guarding the whole frontier, which was threatened on three points, only 1300 men could be collected to oppose the numerous and well-appointed army of Austria, of whom 600 belonged to Schwitz, 400 to Uri, and 300 to Unterwalden. By the advice of Rudolph Reding, an aged veteran, whose judgment in such matters was considered decisive, they posted themselves near Morgarten, where a defile, bounded on

one side by Lake Egeri, and on the other by Mount Sattel, presented a favourable situation for a small body of men to resist the attack of a far larger force.

“And on the day of St. Othmar (Oct. 25) Duke Leopold, endeavouring to pass into their country by a way between a mountain and lake, named Egrer See, was much hindered by the height and steepness of the mountain. For the knights on horseback, boiling with the desire of action, and crowding into the front ranks, entirely prevented the infantry from ascending, seeing that there was scarce room to fix or to preserve the footing. But the Schwitzers, knowing from the above-named Count of Toggenburg that the attack would be made there, and perceiving how much their enemy would be hampered by the difficulty of the way, went down against them from their lurking-places, animated and in high heart, and attacked them like a fish in a net, and slew them without resistance. For they wore, according to custom, certain iron instruments* in their shoes, with which they could walk easily upon mountains, though never so steep, where the enemy and their horses could not so much as plant their feet. And they carried certain deadly weapons, called helnbarts in the vulgar tongue, very terrible, with which they cut asunder the best armed men as with a razor. That was no battle, but rather a slaughter of Duke Leopold's people, as of a flock led to sacrifice. They spared no one, and cared to take no prisoners, but smote all persons indifferently, even to the death. Such as were not slain by them were drowned in the lake, endeavouring to escape by swimming; some, even of the infantry, hearing that their best soldiers were so cruelly struck down by the Schwitzers, leapt into the lake from mere fear, choosing rather to sink under its depths than to fall into the hands of so dreadful a foe. Fifteen hundred men are said to have fallen by the edge of the sword, besides those who were drowned: and by reason of the number of knights

* The same sort of instruments are still worn, especially in traversing the glaciers, and called crampons.

who were lost there, knighthood was scarce in the surrounding country for a long time, for few perished save knights and other nobles, trained to arms from childhood. I myself, being then a school-boy, going out with others to meet my father with no small joy, saw Duke Leopold returning, like one half dead with sorrow. Well might he appear downcast and moody, for he there lost almost all the valour and strength of his army.”*

Fifty men, who had been banished from Schwitz in a period of civil discord, hearing of their country's imminent danger, came to the frontier, and requested permission to serve in the army. The magistrates, whose uncalculating and resolute adherence to law, uninfluenced by expediency, has something noble in it, refused to sanction their appearance within the confines, and the exiles, equally determined in their patriotism, took post on an eminence beyond the frontier of the canton †. In this situation they contributed materially to the success of the day. They commenced the attack by rolling down rocks upon the Austrians as soon as they were entangled

* Vitodurani Chronicon.

† Cimon, son of Miltiades, after having long conducted the policy of Athens, was banished owing to the jealousy of his countrymen, it being supposed that he was unduly attached to the Spartan interest. Previous to the battle of Tanagra, fought in Bœotia, between the Lacedæmonians and Athenians, he came to the camp of the latter, and requested permission to serve with the men of his tribe. This was refused, his enemies asserting that he wished to sow discord in the army, and he was ordered to quit the camp. Before his departure he requested Euthippus and others, his friends, who had shared with him the odium of being too well inclined to the cause of Sparta, to signalize their zeal and courage in the ensuing battle, and refute, by their actions, the stigma cast upon them. These men, to the number of a hundred, ranged themselves round Cimon's armour, which they erected as their standard, and fell valiantly to a man by each other's side, leaving to the Athenians much regret and repentance that they had wrongfully accused them.—*Plut., Vit. Cimon.*

in the difficulties of the valley; and their countrymen, posted further on upon the mountain side, seized promptly on the favourable moment, and by the novel and unexpected manner of their attack, and the vigour with which they wielded their long and massive halberts, favoured by the difficulties of the ground, improved a temporary disorder into a total defeat. The disinterested bravery of the exiles was recompensed by restoration to their civil rights.

Two other attacks at other points of their frontier were defeated by these gallant mountaineers on the same day, which was ever after commemorated by the Forest Cantons as a festival, and the names of those who fell at Morgarten were recited annually by the Schwitzers in the field of Rutli, the venerated spot in which the overthrow of the Austrian tyranny was planned.

When the French invaded the Forest Cantons in 1798, Morgarten was the scene of a second struggle as brave, but less successful. They attacked simultaneously in three quarters. "On the north side Aloys Reding met them on the same ground where his ancestor, Rudolph Reding, had defeated the Austrians five hundred years before, and the narrow field of Morgarten was twice drenched with the blood of patriots and their oppressors. The women of Schwitz were employed during the whole night of the 1st of May in dragging cannon over rocks and precipices, and carrying fascines for entrenchments; many of them worked with young children on their left arm. Fires were burning on the tops of all the mountains. During the 1st and 2nd of May there was incessant firing both at Morgarten and about Arth; a militia composed of peasants and shepherds made head on this extended line against repeated attacks of regular troops four times their number without giving way, broke them several times with the bayonet, and remained masters of the field everywhere. The loss of the invaders was tenfold their own, but the latter was irreparable; a few such victories and they were annihilated; many of the men had no rest for three or four days and nights, and scarcely any food; some of the posts

were only guarded by women. They were offered the free exercise of their religion, provided they adopted the Helvetic constitution, in which case the army was to leave the country immediately. Many were for fighting on; others, moved at the sight of their wives and children, wished to treat before it came to the worst. The general assembly, held on the 4th, was extremely agitated, and on the point of ending in bloodshed. At last a great majority decided in favour of the terms offered, and peace was signed on the 5th. The French loss was 2754 dead, exclusive of wounded; the people of Schwitz, 431 men and women."*

Aloys Reding, a worthy descendant of a race of patriots, survived this battle some few years. Near the outlet of the Lake of Thun is a monument raised by private regard, with the single inscription, "To the memory of my friend, Aloys Reding," which has given occasion to the following beautiful lines:

Around a wild and woody hill,
 A gravelled pathway treading,
 We reached a votive stone, that bears
 The name of Aloys Reding.
 Well judged the friend who placed it there
 For silence and protection;
 And haply with a finer care
 Of dutiful affection.
 The sun regards it from the west
 Sinking in summer glory;
 And while he sinks, affords a type
 Of that pathetic story.
 And oft he tempts the patriot Swiss
 Amid the groves to linger,
 Till all is dim, save this bright stone,
 Touched by his golden finger †.

The league of the three Cantons was successively joined by Lucern, Berne, and the rest of the Helvetic

* Simond's Switzerland, vol. ii. chap. xxxix.

† Wordsworth.

body, not without exciting the deep ill-will and jealousy of Austria and all the surrounding nobles, of whom some claimed feudal rights over the revolted districts, others dreaded lest the spirit should spread to their own vassals, and work, as in effect it did, the destruction of their hereditary power and privileges. Hostilities were constantly recurring between neighbours so ill-mated; and the battles of Laupen, Tafwyl, Sempach, Næfels, Morat, and others of less note, bear testimony to the steadiness of purpose with which the feudal chiefs strove to crush a rising power diametrically opposed to their own interests and prejudices, and to the skill, courage, and constancy with which the Swiss maintained a contest apparently most unequal. The most remarkable perhaps is that of Sempach, in which another Leopold of Austria advanced with no less confidence against the audacious burghers of the Alps than had his predecessor seventy-one years before. His standard was followed by 167 lords spiritual and temporal, and a numerous and well-appointed army. The four Forest Cantons, with Zurich, Zug, and Glaris, were opposed to this force. Berne, the most powerful of the confederates, being herself at peace with Austria, declined to take any part in their defence.

The Duke directed his main attack on Sempach, a small town, which, in anticipation of the contest, had revolted from him and joined the Swiss. At the same time a division of his army, under the Baron de Bonstetten, threatened Zurich. In addition to the burghers of the city, 1600 men of the Forest Cantons, Zug and Glaris, were collected there; but the enemy's plan of operations rendered it necessary to divide their force: and leaving the men of Zug and Zurich to defend their own territory from invasion, the rest of the Swiss, about 1400 in number, marched to meet the Austrian prince.

"Sempach, a small town about nine miles from Lucern, lies at the head of a lake nearly six miles in length, the country round it rising into meadows, thence into corn-fields, and lastly into extensive woods which

crowned the hills. The Confederates occupied these woods.

“ Early on the 9th of July they reconnoitered the enemy’s army; they saw a numerous well-appointed host, each band led on by an illustrious baron, an avoyer, or one of the duke’s substitutes, whose pride or avarice had occasioned this war. A large body of cavalry, consisting entirely of nobles, who were emulous to achieve the reduction of the Swiss peasants without the aid of the infantry, bore the most formidable aspect. Among all the chiefs none was more conspicuous than Duke Leopold, at that time five-and-thirty years of age; manly, high-minded, full of martial ardour, elate with former victories, revengeful, and eager for the combat. It was harvest-time; his people reaped the corn: the nobles approached the walls of Sempach, and upbraided the citizens: one of them held up a halter, and said, ‘ This is for your avoyer:’ others demanded that breakfast should be sent out to the reapers; these were answered, ‘ The Swiss are bringing it.’ The duke seeing the Confederates on the eminences, forgot, or perhaps never knew, that cavalry attack with far greater advantage on an ascent than on a declivity; he unadvisedly ordered the nobles, whom their heavy armour rendered very unfit for the evolutions of infantry, to dismount, and sent their horses to a distance in the rear. He formed them in such close array that the long spears of the rear ranks reached the front of the line, and formed a thorny fence that was deemed impenetrable. John, Lord of Ochsenstein, commanded this formidable phalanx. The vanguard, consisting of fourteen hundred foot, headed by Frederick, Count of Zollern, was sent into the rear. If the duke actually meant to wait for the attack, he erroneously adopted the plan that becomes a commander who opposes a small to a superior force. To this he may have been induced by the romantic gallantry of his nobles, who scorned advantages gained by stratagem, or a manifest superiority of numbers, and deemed that a victory thus gained would leave the palm of valour undecided; and the bright qualities of Leopold fitted him much more

for high feats of chivalry than for the command of an army.

“John, Baron de Hassenberg, an experienced veteran, after examining the position and appearance of the enemy, intimated to the nobles that presumptuous hardiness often proves fatal, and recommended that the Baron de Bonstetten might be sent for without delay ; but they reprobated his caution : and thus also, when the duke was admonished that in all engagements unforeseen accidents do happen ; that the province of a chief is to conduct the army, and of the army to defend its chief ; and that the loss of a commander is often more ruinous than that of half his force, he at first answered with a smile of indifference ; but being urged with still greater solicitude he replied with warmth, ‘ Shall Leopold look on from afar and see how his brave knights combat and die for him ? No ; I will conquer here on this land, which of right is mine, or perish with you for the advantage of my subjects.’

“The Confederates drew up on the eminence under cover of the wood. As long as the knights were mounted, they thought it scarce possible to stand the brunt of their attack in the plain and open country, and deemed it safer to abide their approach in their present position. No sooner, however, did they see the nobles dismount, than, suspecting a stratagem which they might not be able to guard against in the wood, they advanced towards the plain. Their contracted line consisted of four hundred men from Lucern, nine hundred from the other Forest Cantons, and about one hundred from Glaris, Zug, Gersau, Entlibuch, and Rotenburg. Each band, under its proper banner, was commanded by the landamman of its valley, and the Lucerners by their avoyer : they were armed with short weapons ; some held the halberts which their fathers had wielded at Morgarten ; several instead of shields had small boards tied round their left arms. According to ancient custom they knelt and implored a blessing from on high. The nobles closed their helmets ; the Duke created knights ; the sun stood high ; the day was sultry.

“The Swiss, after their devotion, ran full speed, and

with loud clamour, across the plain, seeking an opening where they might break the line and spread havoc on each side of them; but they were opposed by a solid range of shields as by a wall, and by the numberless points of spears as by a thick fence of iron thorns. The men of Lucern, more exasperated than the rest at the unexpected impediments, made many fierce attempts to break the line, but all of them ineffectual. The knights moving with hideous rattle, attempted to bend their line into a crescent, meaning to out-flank and surround the assailants. The banner of Lucern was now for a time in imminent danger, the avoyer having been severely wounded, and several of the principal leaders slain. Anthony du Port, a Milanese, who had settled in the valley of Uri, cried out, 'Strike the poles of the spears, they are hollow:' this was effected; but the broken spears were immediately replaced by fresh ones, and Du Port himself perished in the conflict. The knights, partly owing to their unskilfulness, and more to the unwieldiness of their armour, found it impracticable to form the intended crescent; but they stood firm and unshaken. The Confederates, who had now lost sixty men, became apprehensive of a movement of the van-guard from the rear, and did not think themselves altogether secure against a surprise from Bonstetten.

"This anxious suspense was at length decided by one heroic deed. Arnold Struthan de Winkelried, a knight of Underwalden, burst suddenly from the ranks. 'I will open a passage,' he cried, 'into the enemy's line. Provide for my wife and children, dear countrymen and confederates; honour my race!' He threw himself instantly on the enemy's pikes, grasped as many of them as he could reach, buried them in his bosom, and being tall and large of limb, bore them to the ground as he fell. His companions rushed over his body; the whole army of confederates followed, and their close files penetrated with irresistible force. The enemy, struck with amazement, fell one over another in endeavouring to avoid their shock; and the pressure, heat, and confusion thus produced proved fatal to many knights, who died without a wound, stifled by the weight of their armour. Others

of the Swiss meanwhile had mustered in the woods, and now hastened to reinforce the conquerors.

“One of the first who fell in the Austrian army was Frederick, the bastard of Brandis, a bold and strong man, who alone inspired as much fear as twenty others; and near him was killed Frietzhend, called the Long, who boasted that he alone would resist the Confederates. The servants of the nobles, who had been left with the baggage, seeing the fortune of the day, saved themselves upon their masters’ horses. The banner of Austria dropped from the hands of Henri d’Escheloh. Ulrich d’Ortenburg fell upon the flag of the Tyrol. Ulrich d’Aarburg rushed to preserve the former. He held it aloft, and endeavoured to restore the day, but without success. He fell mortally wounded; and collected his remaining strength to exclaim, ‘Save it, Austria, save it!’ The Duke broke through the press, and received the banner from his dying hand. It soon re-appeared above the combatants, steeped in blood, and borne by Leopold himself. A crowd of gentlemen collected for his defence, and fell around him. At length he exclaimed, ‘Since so many lords are dead by my side, I also, like them, will die with honour.’ He sprang forth from among his friends, rushed into the thickest of the enemy, and there met his doom: he fell, and while weighed down by his ponderous armour and struggling in vain to raise himself, he was approached by a common man from Schwitz, who levelled a blow at him. Leopold called out, ‘I am the Duke of Austria;’ but the man either heard him not, believed him not, or thought that in a day of battle the highest rank conferred no privilege: the Duke received a mortal wound. Martin Malterer, the banneret of Friburg in Brisgau, saw the disaster: he stood appalled: the banner dropped from his hand: he threw himself upon the corpse of his slaughtered sovereign to preserve it from insult, and there met his own fate.

“The Austrian infantry now, looking round in vain for their Duke, betook themselves to flight. The nobles called loudly for their horses; but the dust they saw

rising at a distance marked the road by which their faithless servants had long since led them away. Oppressed by their heavy armour, by heat, thirst, and fatigue, they still resolved to avenge their sovereign; and if they could not preserve their lives, at least not to fall easy victims to the resistless fury of their triumphant foes.

“ Among the leaders of the Confederates fell Conrad, landamman of Uri; Sigrist, landamman of Unterwalden above the Forest; and Peterman de Gundoldingen, the avoyer of Lucern. While the latter was bleeding to death, one of his townsmen approached him to learn his dying requests: he, unmindful of all private concerns, answered, ‘ Tell our fellow-citizens never to continue an avoyer longer than one year in office; tell them that this is the last advice of Gundoldingen, who dies contented, wishing them repeated victories, and a long series of prosperous years;’ thus saying, he breathed his last. The banner of Hohenzollern was taken by a shepherd of Gersan. The services of the burghers of Bremgarten, who withdrew from the field covered with the blood of slaughtered foes, were so greatly prized by the Austrian princes, that they immortalized their valour by a change in the colours of their town livery. Nicholas Gutt, avoyer of Zoffingen, fell, together with twelve of his townsmen. Regardless of every concern but that of preventing his banner from falling into the hands of the enemy, he tore it into small pieces, and was found among the dead with the staff fast locked between his teeth. His successors in office have ever after been made to swear that they would maintain the banner ‘ even as Nicholas Gutt had maintained it.’ Six hundred and fifty-six counts, lords, and knights, whose presence was wont to grace the court of Austria, were found among the slain; and it became proverbial among the Confederates, ‘ that God had on this day sat in judgment on the wanton arrogance of the nobles.’ ”*

* Planta, History of the Helvetic Confederacy. We have taken the liberty of making a few alterations in the text, to bring it nearer to the great work of Müller, of which this passage is a direct, but rather a free translation.

CHAPTER VIII.

Thermopylæ*—Battle of St. Jaques, near Basle—Siege of Malta in 1565—Destruction of the “Sacred Band” in the Greek Revolution—Roncesvalles.

THE plain of Thessaly is so entirely surrounded by mountains, that only one practicable, or at least only one frequented road leads southward from it into Greece; and even this is commanded by a difficult and dangerous pass, the celebrated Thermopylæ, where the first stand was made by Greece against Xerxes, and the noblest instance of Spartan heroism displayed. The ridge of Cæta, which runs in an unbroken line from west to east, falls precipitously into the sea, leaving but a narrow slip of level ground, which had, in old times, been fortified by the Phocians who lay immediately south of Thessaly, and were separated from it only by Mount Cæta, to check the depredations of their Thessalian neighbours. At this spot some hot springs burst from the mountain, whence the name Thermopylæ, which signifies the Warm Gates, and here the pass was about fifty feet wide; but to the northward it grew still narrower, and in one part required the assistance of masonry to make the road passable even for a single carriage. A more favourable spot for stopping an invading army could not have been selected, and it seems not impossible, that if the force of Greece, or even a large portion of it, had

* Those who have travelled from Conway to Bangor since the new road was cut, will recollect a spot closely resembling Thermopylæ. The grandeur of the pass, however, is much injured by the change, and we strongly recommend all who are not particular about their horses' knees or their own necks to take the old road.

been stationed there, the Persian advance might have been effectually checked. But in the time that union was most required, jealousy and selfishness swayed the Grecian councils. Thessaly was already lost, through the same fear which afterwards abandoned Attica to the invader; and now, when the fate of all Greece northward of the Isthmus was in the balance, the Peloponnesians were only anxious to fortify the approach to their own peninsula, and to remain near home, in case a debarkation should be made from the fleet. Under various pretences of religion each state kept back the contingent which it ought to have supplied, except Arcadia, which sent a force amounting to 2120 men. The rest of Peloponnesus contributed less than 1000 men, divided in the following proportions: Mycenæ, then a small, but still independent town, sent 80; Phlius, 200; Corinth, 400; and Sparta only 300 men, but these were powerful in the generous devotedness of Leonidas, their king and general. The whole force of Athens served in the fleet. But though the Peloponnesians themselves held back, they published a manifesto, to excite the northern Greeks to resistance. "These troops," it is said, "were but the forerunners of a larger body that might be daily expected; the sea was well guarded by the Athenians, Æginetans, and others; and there was no ground for extravagant alarm, for it was no god, but a man, that waged war upon Greece; and there was no man to whom evil did not at some time happen, and the greatest evils to the most exalted persons: it was therefore probable that the invader's hopes would be frustrated." The little town of Thespiæ, to its eternal honour, sent 700 men;* Thebes, ill affected to the cause, but 400; the Phocians added 1000, and the Opuntian Locrians came with their whole force. Their number is not mentioned by Herodotus, but Pausanias estimates it "not to have exceeded 6000 men."† Thus the army consisted of

* The whole force of Platæa served on board the Athenian fleet.

† Lib. x. 20.

about 11,200 heavy-armed citizens, attended perhaps by 13,000 light-armed soldiers, consisting chiefly of slaves, supposing the same proportion to have existed between the services as existed afterwards at the battle of Plataea, where each Spartan was attended by seven Helots, and the other Grecians, upon the average, by one slave a-piece.

On the approach of the Persians the disinclination of the Peloponnesians to the service was manifested by a proposal to retreat to the Isthmus. This was warmly opposed by the Locrians and Phocians, and finally negatived by Leonidas, who instead despatched a messenger to demand reinforcements. Meanwhile Xerxes sent forward a scout to observe the motions of the Grecian army. A wall, as has been mentioned, stretched across the level, behind which the greater part of it was quartered, so that he only saw an outpost of Spartans, who were amusing themselves with gymnastic exercises, and combing their long hair, and took no notice whatever of the intruder. On hearing what he had seen, Xerxes marvelled; and ~~making~~ ^{thinking} it impossible that so insignificant a force should be so resolute to contest the passage, he allowed them four days to disperse, and sent against them, on the fifth, the Medes and Cissians, with orders to take them alive and bring them into the royal presence. When they had been repulsed with slaughter, a chosen body of Persian foot, called the Immortals, advanced with confidence to fulfil the commands of their sovereign, and were in their turn compelled to retreat from the firm array of the Grecians; not, we are led to believe, from inferiority in the qualities, mental or bodily, which constitute the excellence of a soldier, but their numbers were useless in so confined a spot, and their short spears and light defensive armour proved ineffectual to penetrate the longer lances and iron panoply of their opponents. The attack, however, though still fruitless, was repeated in every various way that their ingenuity could devise, and the Persian monarch is said to have leaped thrice from his throne as he sat anxiously viewing the progress of his troops. On the morrow the battle was renewed in hope

of wearing out by fatigue and wounds the scanty force of the Grecians, but still it was in vain; and Xerxes was reduced to much perplexity, when he learnt from a Thes-salian, Ephialtes the Malian, that another practicable road across the mountain existed. The traitor did not long enjoy the fruits of his perfidy, for a price was set on his head by the Amphictyonic council, and he was slain by one that had a private quarrel with him. It was known to Leonidas that such a path existed; and the Phocians were appointed to guard it, and posted at the summit of the pass. They could not see the enemy's approach for the oaks with which the mountain was covered; but, about day-break, were roused by the tread of men upon the fallen leaves. They flew to arms; but, being galled by the Persian missiles, they retreated to one side for the advantage of higher ground, and thus left a free passage to the enemy, who hastened to profit by their error, and left them in undisturbed possession of the post so injudiciously chosen. The army at Thermopylæ was already forewarned; first by the seer Megistias, who from the omens foretold the approach of death; then by deserters from the Persian camp, announcing the march of an army across the mountain; and lastly from the watchmen stationed on the heights, who brought news that it had forced the passage.

Their flank being thus turned, it became impossible for the Greeks to maintain their position; and now a question ensued concerning the measures to be adopted; one party recommending a retreat, while the other urged the duty of remaining to the last at their post. The dispute was terminated by the retreat and dispersion of the majority to their several homes, while the rest remained with Leonidas, resolved to die rather than turn their backs upon the enemy; or, as another story runs, which Herodotus is more inclined to credit, Leonidas himself dismissed his allies, seeing them slow in spirit to encounter death, retaining with him only the 300 Spartans, whose institutions forbade them to retreat, even when resistance was hopeless. The Thespians and Thebans alone remained: the Thebans very unwillingly;

but Leonidas detained them as hostages for the fidelity of their countrymen. The Thespians on the other hand insisted on remaining, saying that they would not go away, abandoning Leonidas and the Spartans, but rather abide and die with them. Demophilus, son of Diadromus, was their general. According to Pausanias, the eighty Mycenæans also remained. One motive for Leonidas's devotion is to be found in the deep respect and attachment to national institutions which was only common to him with his countrymen: but he is said to have had a more peculiar and personal inducement. The Delphic oracle had foretold that Sparta herself, or one of her kings, must fall; and this prediction, in recalling the fame of Codrus, must have suggested the possibility of rivalling him. But rather than to either of these feelings we would attribute it to the belief that his death would be more useful to Greece than his life; the only motive perhaps which could justify the sacrifice of so many brave men, at the time when they were most needed. Greece did indeed require some noble example to rouse her councils to unanimity and firmness: and he who gave it has his due reward in the admiration of the brave and patriot spirits of all nations and of all succeeding ages.

The next morning, with the rising sun, Xerxes offered worship to that luminary, the great object of Persian veneration, in presence of his assembled army; and after a brief delay gave orders to advance against the enemy. Hitherto the Grecians seem to have taken post in the narrowest part of the valley, where, as has been mentioned, there was only room for one carriage to pass; but now, knowing that their fate was sealed, and anxious only to sell their lives dearly, they retreated to the broader part, which had formerly been fortified, with the view of allowing freer access, and insuring a more abundant destruction of their foes. And in truth the slaughter was commensurate with their desperation, for in the three days' conflicts 20,000 Asiatics were left dead in the pass. We should be inclined to attribute to misinformation or mistake the statement, that in the

army of a warlike and conquering nation, like the Persians, the officers followed behind, furnished with scourges, with which they drove on their men to the attack, so that many were forced into the sea, and perished there, and still more trodden under foot in the press, while those who escaped were driven on the Grecian spears by the pressure from behind. At last these weapons were broken, and the combat assumed a closer character. Hand to hand they fought at the sword's point; and now Leonidas, with others of the noblest Spartans, fell, and by his death added fresh ferocity to the combat. The possession of his body was disputed with an obstinacy which recalls the Homeric battles to our minds: two sons of Darius were slain in the struggle, in which the Greeks prevailed so far as to gain possession of the body, and four times to drive back the crowd of enemies. The scene was closed by the arrival of the Persians led by Ephialtes in the rear. The Thebans, who had hitherto co-operated with their countrymen, now separated themselves, and made submission, protesting, as indeed was true, that they had been among the first to give earth and water, and were present at Thermopylæ through compulsion.* The Lacedæmonians and Thespians retired to a hillock, where they continued the battle with their swords, and, when these were broken, with their hands and teeth, until they were slain to a man.

Such is the account of this celebrated conflict published by Herodotus less than thirty years after, at a time when many of the Thebans and of the Greeks who served in the Persian army must have been alive to correct any erroneous statements. But later historians, and

* Plutarch, himself a Bœotian, is highly indignant at this statement, and also at the former, that the Thebans were detained as hostages. It must be owned that there is something wanting in explanation, since it is not clear how they could have been made to fight, if disinclined; but it seems equally clear that they were very deficient in that ardour which animated the Spartans and Thespians, and therefore cannot be supposed to have remained quite voluntarily.

among them Diodorus and Plutarch, give a very different version; that, when news first arrived that a Persian force was on its march across the mountain, Leonidas led his men to a night attack, in which they penetrated to the royal pavilion, and, wandering about the camp in a vain attempt to discover the fugitive king, were at last dispersed and cut to pieces. But it seems hardly probable that the Spartan king, who had garrisoned the mountain pass in expectation that it would be attempted, should have devoted his soldiers to inevitable death, until he knew that his precautions had failed: and even without this corroboration the superior credit due to a contemporary would determine our adherence to the story of Herodotus.

Several sayings, which have gained notoriety, are ascribed to Leonidas upon Plutarch's authority. To Xerxes, who sent to bid him lay down his arms, he replied, "Come and take them." He admonished his soldiers, before their final battle, to dine as became men who were to sup with the dead. To one who said that the multitude of the Persian arrows would darken the sun, he answered, "Is it not an advantage for us to fight in the shade?"*

The body of Leonidas was beheaded and exposed on a cross by order of Xerxes: an act at variance with the usual generosity of the Persians, who were noted for the respect which they paid to bravery in an enemy. The Greeks were buried where they had fallen, the Spartans and Thespians apart from the rest, and a sepulchral barrow heaped over their remains, upon which the statue of a lion was subsequently placed in honour of Leonidas. Pillars were afterwards erected by the council of Amphictyons, with inscriptions to distinguish the resting-places of the slain. A tumulus still remains in the defile of Thermopylæ, topped by the ruins of a massive basement, which is supposed by Dr. Clarke to

* This speech is given by Herodotus to another Spartan, Dieneces, whom he mentions as famous for his smart sayings. The second is spurious, if we reject Plutarch's assertion that the battle was fought by night.

be the monument above described, and to mark the very spot where this lofty sacrifice was completed. The following epitaph was engraved on the pillar erected in honour of those who fell before the departure of the allies: "Here four thousand Peloponnesians fought with three million of Persians." The tomb of the Spartans was distinguished by these lines:—"Stranger, bear word to the Lacedæmonians that we lie here in obedience to their institutions."* A pillar was also erected by the celebrated poet Simonides in commemoration of his friend, the seer Megistias, who being an Acarnanian, and therefore free to depart with the other Grecians, sent away his only son, but remained himself to perish with Leonidas. He placed on it this inscription:—

This tomb records Megistias' honoured name,
Who, boldly fighting in the ranks of fame,
Fell by the Persians near Sperchius' tide.
Both past and future well the prophet knew,
And yet, though death was open to his view,
He chose to perish at his general's side.

At the time of the battle two Spartans, Aristodemus and Eurytus, were absent upon leave, being nearly blind from ophthalmia. Eurytus, on hearing that the Persians had turned the pass, called immediately for his armour, and, guided by a Helot, found his way to the battle in

* The epitaph is simple, and therefore in good taste; but we are bound to expose the braggart spirit which takes no notice of the Thespians and Locrians, who joined the Peloponnesians, not with a paltry quota, but with their whole force. We may also observe that national vanity has been further tampering with the numbers. Herodotus reckons Xerxes' land force to consist of 2,100,000 men, and adds 541,610 for the fleet, making a total of 2,641,610 combatants. The camp-followers of various sorts he supposes may have amounted to an equal number. Incredible as it appears, his account is so particular that it has evidently been founded upon numerical data of some sort: it is hardly possible to estimate the amount of exaggeration and misstatement.

time to perish there. Aristodemus considered his illness a fair excuse to remain away from it; and this would have passed current at Sparta, the historian thinks, but for the contrast afforded by the conduct of Eurytus. As it was, the Spartans were greatly incensed: on his return he found himself a marked and dishonoured man, with whom none would converse, to whom none would give, and from whom none would receive, fire: a common method among the ancients of testifying abhorrence and renouncing intercourse; and he was usually called Aristodemus the trembler. He afterwards obliterated his disgrace at the battle of Plataea, where he was killed, after having merited the first prize of valour: but his behaviour then was considered sufficient only to restore his character, not to entitle him to the honours paid to others, the most distinguished of the slain. Another Spartan, Pantites, who had been despatched into Thessaly as a messenger, it was supposed might have hastened his return so as to have been present, and was also dishonoured. On his return to Sparta he hanged himself in despair.

The magnitude of the interest at stake, and the brilliant talents employed in celebrating the events of the Persian war, have conspired to confer extraordinary celebrity upon the self-devotion of Leonidas and his comrades. To the great merit of it we fully subscribe: its disinterestedness cannot be questioned, its wisdom and utility are justified by the panic fear of Persia still prevalent in Greece, which required to be dispelled by some lofty and spirit-stirring act of patriotism: but having paid our tribute of admiration to these brave men, and to the steady valour and patient endurance of the Athenians, we have, as will appear more fully in the next chapter, little commendation to bestow on the rest of Greece. The division of the country into small independent states, conducive perhaps to its glory, as tending to produce that extraordinary activity of mind, that multitude of distinguished names which adorn its history, was too dearly purchased by the spirit of rivalry and narrow-minded patriotism which it generated; if that

feeling deserves to be called patriotism which looks merely to the aggrandisement of a single city at the expense of neighbours who should be endeared to her by the ties of blood, and by community of language, interests, and associations. One instance of this jealousy and disunion has already occurred in the tardy and ineffectual assistance sent by Peloponnesus to the northern states.

The history of Switzerland is, on the other hand, advantageously distinguished by the readiness which the different members of the Helvetic League have shown to succour each other, even where ruin seemed to be the consequence of interference. Before the admission of Berne into the Confederacy, that city, being menaced by a powerful army of nobles intent upon its destruction, sent a messenger to the cantons of Schwitz, Uri, and Underwalden, called the Waldstetten, or Forest Cantons, to represent the imminence of their danger and to implore succour. The people answered, "True friends appear in the time of need: go, tell your citizens we will prove it to them." A body of nine hundred men immediately marched to the help of the Bernese, with whose assistance the celebrated battle of Laupen was fought and gained against immensely superior forces. Nor did Berne prove ungrateful for this timely aid. At a later period, the Forest Cantons being at war with Zurich, which had been detached by Austria from the interests of the Confederacy, and being threatened by the whole power of Austria itself, sent messengers to represent their situation to the Bernese, who had always been averse to the contest, and declined engaging in it. "Dear trusty Confederates," they said, "remember the day of Laupen, when your ancestors, being threatened with utter ruin by the nobles, sent to us, to demand our aid. We were not at that time allied to you, and yet what did we say? 'Need,' we said, 'is the test of friendship.' You have heard of the tears of joy that were shed when our banners were seen approaching to your walls; you knew what Erlach said after the victory, 'This day shall be an everlasting pledge of our union.'

From that day we have been allies. Men of Berne, sons of the conquerors of Laupen, we are now involved in great difficulties ; the power of Austria, to which Zurich has basely surrendered, bears hard upon us ; numbers of ours have perished within these few days, and our enemies expect great reinforcements from distant parts. We may be overpowered. Dear trusty Confederates, Need is the test of friendship.”* The name and recollection of Laupen had power to overrule the suggestions of prudence ; the required succours were sent, and the Swiss were victorious.

Two of the many gallant struggles made by the Swiss in defence of their liberty have already been described. A third, the battle of St. Jaques, near Basle, has been called the Swiss Thermopylæ ; and the name is justified, not by the circumstances of the battle, but by the indomitable courage and uniform fate of the conquered. The Dauphin of France, afterwards Louis XI., at the head of a large army of the mercenary troops called Armagnacs, from the Counts D’Armagnac, two of their chiefs, advanced against Basle for the purpose of breaking up the council of the church then sitting there in defiance of the Pope, and to assist Frederic of Austria, the Emperor of Germany, in recovering the possessions in Switzerland which his ancestors had lost. His force consisted of 8000 English and 14,000 French, and was still further increased by the vassals of Austria. Sixteen hundred men were detached by the Swiss with orders to throw themselves into Basle at all hazards. Two of the members of the council, returning from the city, met them on the eve before the battle, and informed them of the strength of the enemy and the difficulty of reaching Basle. They replied, “If things must needs so happen to-morrow, and we cannot break by force through the said obstacles, we will consign our souls to God, and our bodies to the Armagnacs.” They advanced, and the same evening routed a corps of horse 8000 strong. “Early the next morning they arrived

* *Planta, Helv. Confed., book ii. cap. 2.*

near a bridge over the Birs ; and met emissaries from Basle, admonishing them not to attempt the passage of the river, the main army of the Dauphin being posted on its opposite banks. They might now have retreated with honour ; but, flushed with the successes of the preceding day, and not doubting that, as they were now within a mile of Basle, the burghers would make a seasonable diversion in their favour, they resolved to accomplish the purpose for which they had been sent, or to perish in the attempt. They came to the bridge ; but found it so strongly defended, that the forcing it was deemed wholly impracticable. They now threw themselves into the torrent, crossed it with the utmost speed, rushed up the opposite bank in the face of a numerous artillery, and began a dreadful slaughter, mowing down whole ranks of the enemy with their massive halberts, not, however, without great loss on their own part. Their forced marches, their previous conflicts, and their present arduous contest, had now so totally exhausted them, and their numbers were so greatly reduced, that in hopes of some respite they turned off to the right, and took shelter in the churchyard and orchard belonging to the hospital of St. Jacob, both surrounded by high walls. The burghers of Basle were at this critical moment preparing to send out a detachment ; but the Dauphin, who expected the attempt, had posted eight thousand men on an eminence near the gate ; who, had the garrison ventured the sally, would have cut off their retreat, and exposed them to inevitable destruction. The cannon of the French meanwhile had not only thrown down the walls round the hospital, but also set fire to the building ; and the Confederates, in the midst of flames and ruins, found themselves at the same time exposed to the attacks of accumulated numbers, without any defence but their firmness and valour. They still might have retreated without any disparagement to their honour ; but after a short consultation, they resolved to devote themselves for the good of their country, and fall together. The heroic deeds that were achieved in this memorable conflict, the num-

ber of fierce assaults this devoted band sustained and repelled, how each warrior fell successively on the identical spot he had first occupied, are facts imperfectly related, but may be well inferred from the general circumstances of the action. They fought ten hours without intermission; till at length, exhausted but not conquered, they all (twelve only excepted) lay lifeless on the field of action. Each had four or five enemies around him, whom he had despatched before his fall. Burcard Monk, the faithless guide of the invaders, riding in the evening over the field of slaughter, exclaimed triumphantly, 'This is indeed a bath of roses!' An expiring Swiss heard him, raised himself on his knees, snatched a large stone, and hurled it at the head of the vaunting traitor, who died three days after of the contusion. The twelve who, when no hopes remained, retired from the carnage, with difficulty escaped the hands of the executioner, to which the law of Sempach doomed all who turned away from an enemy.

"The Dauphin concealed the number of his slain, by causing them to be immediately committed to the flames; but six hundred dead horses found on the field sufficiently evinced the magnitude of his loss. Fearful of such another victory, he drew off his forces into Alsace, committed depredations on both sides of the Rhine, and gave the Emperor ample reason to repent of having called in such auxiliaries. After his retreat, the burghers of Basle gathered the bodies of the Confederates, and with solemn obsequies buried them in the churchyard of St. Jacob."* Six thousand French are reported to have fallen. Æneas Sylvius, afterwards Pope Pius II., was present at the council of Basle, and gives a lively description of the battle in one of his letters. "Here was fought a stern and piteous battle. The Swiss tore the bloody arrows from their bodies; those even who had a hand lopped off rushed on the enemy and took a life in exchange for their own. Four Armagnacs attacked one Switzer, and felled him, when a comrade rushed upon

* Planta, Hist. Helvetic Confederacy.

them, grasping his battle-axe, and slew two; the others fled. He carried off the yet breathing body to his comrades. Behind the Swiss there was a walled orchard, which they thought would protect them, so that they would only have to fight to the front. But the Germans and Armagnacs undermined the wall, which was the chief cause of the destruction of the Swiss. They fought in front and to the rear, man to man, sword to sword. The Swiss, like lions, forced their way unconquered through the army, slaying and overturning all, as men who know that they fight with no hope of victory, but to avenge their death: the battle lasted from the dawn till evening. At length the Swiss fell amidst the mighty host of the enemy, not conquered, but rather weary with conquering. A mournful and most bloody victory was it to the Armagnacs, and the field remained in their possession, from their superiority, not in bravery, but in numbers."

The law of Sempach, which is mentioned above, furnishes a good specimen of the simplicity and resolution of the Swiss character. Modern treaties of alliance are hardly so brief, so emphatic, or so well observed.

"We, the eight Helvetic Cantons, and the city and district of Soleure, agree to preserve peace and unanimity amongst ourselves, and to uphold each other, so that every individual may enjoy perfect security in his house, and be no ways molested either in his person or property. All traders shall be protected in their persons and merchandise. No one shall wantonly give cause for dissension, or be accessory in fomenting animosities; but when a war cannot be avoided, and our banners advance against an enemy, each of us will, after the example of our forefathers in their many perils, firmly unite, and march out together to redress our wrongs. Whoever deviates from his duty, or otherwise transgresses the laws, and is convicted thereof by two credible witnesses before the tribunal to which he is amenable, shall be sentenced to personal or pecuniary correction. Should any one in battle, or at an attack, be wounded so as to

be disabled from service, he shall nevertheless retain his station, and continue there amidst his companions, until the conflict is terminated, and danger is at an end. On no account must the field of battle be deserted : and (as an enemy has often rallied among the pillagers ; and lately, at Sempach, the foe would have sustained greater loss had not our men been too eager after booty) no one shall betake himself to spoil until permitted by the commander. All the plunder taken shall be delivered to the commander, who shall make an equal distribution of it according to the number of men from each canton. Since Almighty God has declared churches to be his habitation, and has been pleased to effect the salvation of mankind by means of a woman, it is our will and positive decree that none of us shall break open, pillage, or burn, any church or chapel, or any way insult or molest a woman : this law shall suffer no exception, unless when enemies or their property are secreted in sanctuaries, or when women by their clamours impede the progress of our force. This we ordain, accept, and confirm by oath, at a general diet held at Zurich, on the 10th of July, in the year of our Lord 1393."

Vertot, in his History of the Knights of Malta, relates a striking anecdote of similar courage and devotion. "When the Turks besieged that island in 1565, John de la Valette being then Grand Master, they first attacked the castle of St. Elmo, an out-post too small and too distant from the main works to hold out long against their continual assaults. The knights who were quartered there made a gallant resistance, but their cannon being dismounted, their defences breached, and their numbers thinned, they sent a deputation to the Grand Master to represent the deplorable condition of the place, that it was no longer tenable, and that sending over reinforcements to them was worse than useless, because it insensibly consumed the troops necessary for the defence of the island. Most of the Grand Crosses, who composed the council of the Order, coincided with these views, but the Grand Master was of a contrary opinion. He agreed, indeed, that the fort was not tenable, and

owned that he could not but lament the fate of the knights who in so dangerous a post were exposed to daily death ; but he insisted that there are some circumstances in which it is necessary to hazard some of the limbs to save the body. The Viceroy of Sicily, to whom they looked for relief, had declared, that if that fort were lost he would not attempt to save the island. The whole safety of Malta, therefore, depended on the length of the siege, and it was absolutely necessary to protract it as long as possible. The Council came over to his opinion, and with their concurrence he impressed on the garrison that the preservation or loss of the island, and, perhaps, of the Order itself, depended on the time that they should hold out the place, and bade them call to mind the vows they had made at their profession, and that they were obliged to sacrifice their lives for the defence of the Order. Finally, he would not fail to send such reinforcements as the smallness of the fort would admit of, and, if necessary, would throw himself into the place, and there die with them."

After a series of bloody assaults, from the 24th of May to the 21st of June, the garrison were reduced to extremity. They sent a swimmer across the port to the Grand Master, to request succour, and five large boats were soon fitted out and filled with knights. But the shore was now lined with Turkish artillery, and they were unable to effect a landing. "The besieged in the fort being now out of all hopes of succour, thought of nothing but ending their lives like good Christians and true religious. For which purpose they were all night long preparing themselves for it, by receiving the sacraments of the church : when this was over, and that nothing remained but the giving up their souls to God, they embraced one another with tenderness, and retired to their several posts in order to die with their weapons in their hands, and expire in the bed of honour. Such as were not able to walk by reason of their wounds, had themselves carried in chairs to the side of the breach, where, armed with swords, which they held with both their hands, they waited with a heroic resolution till

such time as their enemies, towards whom they were not able to advance, should come and attack them in their posts.

“The next day, the 23rd of June, the Turks, at day-break, came on to the assault with great shouts, as if they were going to a victory which it would be impossible to dispute with them. But the Christian soldiers defended themselves with invincible bravery; one would have thought that the certainty of an approaching death which they were to share in common with the knights, had put them on the same level with respect to courage. They advanced to meet the enemy with as much intrepidity as if they had beaten them, and such as could not walk fired on the enemy with their pieces; and when by reason of their continual discharges they had spent all their powder, they supplied themselves from the pouches of their comrades who had dropped by their side: in fine, the knights having sustained an assault for four hours together, had but sixty persons left to defend the breach; but these were something more than men, who, by a noble contempt of death, still made their enemies tremble. The commander, seeing the place on the point of being forced by the Turks, recalled some Christian soldiers, who till then had maintained themselves upon the cavalier which lay before the fort. The basha, seeing the breach fortified with this small reinforcement, discontinued the assault in an instant, as if he had again been disheartened by so obstinate a resistance, and pretended to retire, but it was only to make his janissaries seize, not only on the cavalier, which was abandoned, but likewise on all such points as were higher than the breach, and overlooked the inside of the fort. The besieged employed this little suspension from fighting in dressing their wounds, not so much for the sake of preserving the poor remains of life as to enable themselves to fight for some moments longer with greater vigour. At eleven in the morning the Turks returned to the assault with new strength, and the janissaries, who from the top of the cavalier and other posts commanded the place with their muskets, pointed

out all such persons as they had a mind to kill. The greater part of them perished by the enemies' fire; the bailiff of Negropont, together with most of the knights and soldiers that were left, being overwhelmed with numbers, died upon the breach; and this terrible assault was discontinued only for lack of combatants, not ending but with the death of the last knight."*

The struggle recently concluded in Greece has been well calculated to awaken the sleeping energies of her people. It is, however, too recent, and the present generation has suffered too severely from the misrule and ignorance under which it was nurtured, for us either to judge severely their past faults and mistakes, or to augur over-boldly concerning their future policy and conduct. That much of selfishness, cabal, and perfidy occurred in the late war, and materially retarded the expulsion of the Turks, is certain; but no one can now assert that Hellenic courage is extinct, and, for Hellenic virtue, we hope to see it much more prominent in the national character than it ever yet has been. The Greeks have long been considered a degraded race: the more civilized, and especially the trading part of them, proverbially mean and dishonest; the mountaineers possessed of the few and capricious virtues, together with the many vices, of barbarians. The time for these general charges is now at an end. From henceforth Greece, we trust, will again rank among the independent nations of Europe: it depends on herself whether she will merit the affection and sympathy which the recollection of her former splendour and long suffering inspires. Nor do we hesitate to believe that she will do so, and to appeal in proof of this to the number of her sons who for years have frequented happier parts of Europe for the sake of a more enlightened and extended education than they could obtain at home. Those who worked their deliverance from a bondage of such ancient date, were necessarily tainted with the vices which that bondage engendered: but as the advantages which the rising generation has possessed become more

* Vertot.

general, and as they succeed to the place and influence of their fathers, who can doubt but that the governors will learn to prefer the general good to their own factions, and corrupt and precarious interests, and the people to appreciate the blessing of internal order, to form true judgments of the national welfare, and to compel attention to it?

On the breaking out of the revolution the students dispersed among the European universities were among the first to offer themselves as soldiers in support of it. Armed in the European manner, they enrolled themselves in a corps called ἱερός λοχός, the sacred band, a title taken from the brief period of Theban splendour under Epaminondas, and assumed as the motto of their standards θάνατος ἢ ἐλευθερία, death or freedom, and the inscription of the Spartan shield, ἡ τὰν ἢ ἐπὶ τὰν,* this, or upon this. The greater part had never felt hardship, nor handled a military weapon before, yet they endured fatigue, privation, and discipline with submission and fortitude, setting an example to the rest which was badly followed. There were about 500 men of this corps with Alexander Ypsilante in his last campaign in Moldavia, on whom he justly placed his chief reliance, and their bravery and unfortunate fate is worthy to be placed by the side of the story of Thermopylæ.

In June, 1821, a severe action took place at Tergowitz, in which the Greeks were worsted, and the Sacred Band much cut up, not without severe loss on the part of the enemy. On the 19th the battle was renewed at Tergoressi. Ypsilante charged at the head of the Sacred Band with an impetuosity which broke the foremost ranks of the Turks. But at the moment when victory

* In ancient Greece the shield served as a bier, to convey home the corpse of its slain owner. To return without it was universally considered disgraceful. "I have frequently seen these inscriptions on Greek standards, particularly the last: the direction was literally followed, for the body of the standard-bearer, who died defending it, was wrapped in it as a shroud, and so borne to the grave, and buried in it."—

Walsh's Journey over-land from Constantinople, p. 218.

seemed to be declaring in their favour, Constantine Douca, an officer of the Greek cavalry, not content with deserting his country in her need, charged treacherously upon his countrymen. Being thus unexpectedly supported, the Turks rallied, and Ypsilante, almost surrounded, with difficulty drew off his troops. The same night he commenced his retreat towards Rimnik, closely pursued, and a third action took place at break of day, at a place called Drageschan, in which another traitor, named Caravia, who commanded the remainder of the cavalry, deserted with them, and the infantry who remained were cut to pieces. The Sacred Band made a gallant defence: the Mussulman infantry thrice charged them, and were thrice repulsed, but the cavalry swept around them, unable to break their ranks, and brought them down by repeated pistol shots. There escaped but about a score, who, with their general, forced a passage through the enemy.

“I cannot describe to you the feelings of respect and regret with which I walked over the ground that covered the remains of these young heroes. I had not long before visited the field of Marathon, and the recollections of it, and of Dr. Johnson’s effusion, were fresh in my mind; but the impressions of both were cold and feeble compared with those of Drageschan. Here was an act of courage and self-devotion among modern Greeks, that rivalled anything similar in the best days of their ancestors, and I was on the spot while the event was yet recent, and their bodies, if I may so say, scarce cold in the clay that covered them. No one has hitherto dared to erect a tomb to designate the spot where they lie, but they live imperishably in the memory of their country; and when England and her allies shall replace it in its due rank among the nations of Christian Europe, a monument on the field of Drageschan will not be forgotten.”*

The battle of Roncesvalles occupies the same promi-

* Walsh, *Journey overland from Constantinople*, p. 222; *Hist. des Evénemens de la Grèce*, par M. Raffenel.

nent station in romance that Thermopylæ does in history. There are few who have not heard in childhood, how the twelve peers of Charlemagne, unequalled in arms, were surrounded by the Saracens in that fatal valley, and slain with their followers to a man, after performing prodigies of valour; or who have read the tale without hating the traitor Ganellon, the Ephialtes of the Christian army. The fact is simply this: Charlemagne's rear-guard, as he returned from an invasion of Spain, was surrounded and cut off with its commander, his nephew Roland or Orlando (the rest of the Paladins are chiefly fabulous), not by the Saracens, but by the Pyrenean mountaineers. The mighty superstructure of falsehood which has been raised on this foundation owes its existence chiefly to the pretended Chronicle of Turpin, Archbishop of Rheims, contemporary with Charlemagne; a work whose real author has not been ascertained, but which was not written before the eleventh century. Its monstrous fictions were pronounced authentic by Pope Calixtus II., A.D. 1122, and have been carefully embodied in the Chronicles of the monks of St. Denys, the most voluminous compilers of their age. So much for the way in which history is manufactured. It has been freely translated by Caxton, and enlarged with incidents from other sources, in a book entitled "The Hystory and Lyf of the Most Noble Crysten Prince Charles the Grete, Kyng of Fraunce and Emperour of Rome, reduced from the latyn and romaunse tongue to the exaltacyon of the crysten faith, and the confusyon of the hethen Sarazyns and myscreants, which is a werk wel contemplatyf for to lyve wel.—The which werk was fynnysshed in the reducing of hit into englysshe the xviii day of Juyn, the second yere of Kyng Richard the thyrd, the yere of our Lord Mcccclxxxv. And imprynted the fyrst day of decembre, the same yere of our Lorde, and the fyrst yere of Kyng Harry the seventh." This book is a good specimen of the studies then fashionable, and also of the style of the father of English printing; who, like very many of the early practisers of that art, was eminent as a man of letters as well as a craftsman. In

this capacity, and as a curious instance of what has passed for history, we quote his narrative of the battle of Roncesvalles, though it be rather long, in hope that the quaintness both of the matter and manner may be found amusing: to those who still feel an interest in the amusements of their childhood, it will need no apology. The story is familiar through the medium of Italian and French romance; but comparatively few are likely to have seen it in its ancient dress.

“HOW the treason was comprysed by Ganellon, and of the deth of crysten men, and how Ganellon is reprewyd by thauctour. Capitulo i.

“In this tyme were in Cezarye two kynges sarazyns moche myghty, that one was named Marfurius, and that other Bellegardus his brother. Whyche were sente by thadmyral of Babylonne into Spayne, the whych were under Kyng Charles, and made to hym sygne of love and of subjectyon, and went by hys commaundement holyly, and under the shadow of deceptyon. Themperour seyng that they were not crystens, and for to get seignourye over them, he sent for Ganellon in whome he had fyaunce; that they sholde doo baptyse them, or elles that they sholde sende to him trybute in sygne of fydelite of their contre. Ganellon the traytre went thyder, and dyd to them the message, and after that he had with them many deceyvable wordes, they sent hym ageyn to Charles wyth xxx hors, laden with gold and sylver, wyth clothes of sylke and other rychesses, and iiii hondred hors, laden wyth swete wyn for to gyve to the men of warre for to drynke; and also they sent above thys to them, a thousand fayr wymmen sarazyns in grete poynte and yonge of age. And alle thys in sygne of love and of obeissaunce: and after they gaf to Ganellon xx hors charged wyth gold and sylver, sylkes and other precyosytes, that by his moyen he sholde brynge in to theyr handes the companye of Charles, if he myghte doo it.

“Thenne Ganellon was surprysed wyth this fals ava-

ryce, whych consumeth alle the sweteness of charyte that is in persones, for to have gold, or sylver and other riches; and made a pacte and coveaunte wyth the sarazyns for to betray his lord, hys neyghbours and crysten bretheren, and sware that he wold not faylle them of thenterpryse. But I merveille moche of Ganellon, whyche made thys treason without to have cause, coloured ne juste.

“O wycked Ganellon, thou were comen of noblesse, and thou hast doon a werk vylaynous, thou wert ryche and a grete lord, and for money thou hast betrayed thy mayster. Emonge alle other thou wert chosen for to goo to the sarazyns for grete trust emonge all the other, and for the fydelite that was thought in thee; thou hast consented to trayson, and allone hast commyted infydelite. Fro whens cometh thyn inyquyte, but of a fals wylle, plunged in thabysme of avaryce. Thy natural sovereign lorde, Rolland, Olyver, and the other, what have they doon to thee? yf thou have a wycked hate agaynst one person, wherefore consentest thou to destroy thynnocentes? was there noo persone that thou lovedest whan to all crysten men thou hast ben traytre? was there any reason in thee whan thou hast ben capytayn agenst the fayth? what availeth the prowesse that thou hast made in tyme passed whan thyne end sheweth that thou hast doon wyckednes? O fals avaryce, and ardeur of concupiscence, he is not the fyrst that by the is comen to myschyef! by the Adam was to God dysobeysaunt, and the noble cyte of Troy the grande put to uttre ruyne and destructyon! Thus in thys manere Ganellon brought gold and sylver, wyn wymmen and other riches as tofore he had enterprysed. Whan Charles sawe al this, he thought that al way doon in good entent, and equitye, and wythout barat.* The gret lordes and knyghtes toke the wyn for them, and Charles toke onely the gold and sylver, and the moyen people took the hethen wymmen. Themperour gaf consente to the wordes of Ganellon. For he spake moche wysely, and wrote in suche wyse

Trick.

that Charles and alle hys hoost passed the porte of Cezarye, for Ganellon dyd hym to understonde, that the kynges aforesayd wold become crysten, and he baptysed, and swere fydelite to themperour. And anone sent hys peple tofore, and he came after in the ryereward, and had sent Roulland, and Olyver, and the moost speeial of hys subgettes wyth a thousand * fyghtyng men, and were in Rounceyvale. Thenne the kynges Marfuryus and Belle-gardus after the counceyl of Ganellon, wyth fyfty thousand sarasyns were hidde in a wode, abydyng and awaytyng the frenssh men, and there they abode ii dayes and two nyghtys and devyded theyr men in two partyes. In the first they put xx m sarasyns, and in that other they put xxx m sarasyns—In the vauntegarde of Charles were xx m crysten men, whyche anone were assayled wyth xx m sarasyns, and maad warre in such wyse, that they were constreyned to withdrawe them. For fro the morning unto the houre of tyerce, they feared not to fyght and smyte on them, wherefore the crysten men were moche wery, and had nede to reaste theym. Nevertheless they dronken wel of the good swete wyn of the sarasyns moche largely. And after many of them that were dronke went and laye by the wymmen sarasynois, and also wyth other that they had brought oute of Fraunce. Wherefor the wylle of God was, that they sholde all be dede, to thende that their martyrdom and passyon myght be the cause of theyr salvacion and purg-ying of theyr synne. For anone after the thyrty thousand sarasyns cam that were in the second batayl upon the frenssh men soo impetuously that they were al dede and slayn. Except Roulland, Baulduyn and Thyerry, the other were slayn and dede with speres, some flayn, some rosted, and other quartered, and submysed to many tormentes. And whan thys discomfiture was doon, Ganellon was with Charles, and also tharchebyssshop Turpyn, whych knew nothyng of this werke so sorouful, sauf onely the traytre, whyche supposed that they had

* Twenty thousand, according to the Cronique de St. Denys.

al ben destroyed and put to deth. Of the languysabe that was comynge to Charles he wist not how sone it was comynge.

“OF the deth of kyng Marforius, and how Roulland was hurt wyth four speres mortally, after that al his peple were slayn. Capitulo ii.

“The bataylle as I have sayd tofore was moche sharpe. Whan Roulland, which was moche wery, returned, he encountred in hys waye a sarasyn moche fyers, and blacke as boyled pytch and anone he toke hym at thentre of a wode, and bonde hym to a tree straytely, wythoute doying to him any more harme, and after took and rode upon a hylle for to see the hoost of the sarasyns, and the crysten menne that were fledde, and sawe grete quantyte of paynymys. Wherefore anone he sowned and blew his horne of yvorie moche lowde. And wyth that noyse came to hym an hundred crysten men wel arayed and habyllid wythoute moo. And whan they were come to hym, he returned to the sarasyn that was bounde to the tree. And Roulland helde his sword over hym, saying that he shold deye, if he shewed to hym not clerely the kyng Marfuryus, and yf he so sholde do, he sholde not deye. The sarasyn was content, and sware that he sholde gladly do it for to save hys lyf, and soo he brought hym with hym unto the place where they sawe the paynymys, and shewed to Rolland whyche was the kynge, whych rode upon a redde hors, and other certayn tokenes. And in thys poynt, Roulland reconfermed in hys strengthe, trustyng verily in the myght of God, and in the name of Jhesus, as a lyon entred into the bataylle, and emonge them he encountred a sarasyn, whych was gretter than ony of the other, and gaf to hym so grete a stroke wyth Durindal his swerde upon the hede, that he cleft hym and hys hors in two partes, that the one parte went on one syde, and that other on the other syde. Wherefore the sarasyns were soo troubled and abasshed of the myght and puissaunce of Rolland, that they alle fled tofore hym, and

then abode the kyng Marfuryus wyth a fewe folke. Thenne Rolland sawe thys kynge. And wythout fere came to hym and putte hym to deth incontynent. And alle the hondred crysten men that were wyth Roulland in thys rencountre were dolorously slayn and put to deth, except onely Baulduyn and Thyerry, whych for fere fled into the wode. But after that Rolland had slayn kyng Marfuryus, he was sore oppressed and in suche wyse deteyned, that wyth four grete speres he was smyten and wounded mortally, and beten wyth stones, and hurte wyth dartes and other shotte mortally. And notwithstondyng these grevous hurtes and woundes yet maulgre al the sarasyns he sprange out of the bataylle, and sauved hymself the best wyse he myght. Bellegardus broder of Marfuryus, doubtyng that helpe and ayde sholde come to the crysten people, retorned into another countre wyth hys peple moche hastely. And themperour Charles had thenne passed the montagne of Roncyvale, and knewe nothyng of these thynges aforesayd, ne what he had doon.

“HOW Rolland deyed holyly after many martyres and orysons made to God ful devoutely, and of the complaynte maad for hys swerde Durandal. Capitulo iii.

“Rolland the valyaunt, and champyon of the crysten fayth, was moche sorouful of the crysten men bycause they had noo socours. He was moche very gretely abasshed and moche affebled in hys persone, for he had lost moche of hys blode by his foure mortal woundes, of whych the leste of them was suffysaunt for hym to have deyed, and he had gret payn to get hym oute fro the Sarasyns, for to have a lytel commemoracyon of God before or the soule sholde depart fro hys body. So moche he enforced hym, that he came to the fote of a montayne nygh to the port of Cesarye, and brought hymself nygh to a rocke ryght by Roncyval, under a tree in a fayr medowe. Whan he sat doon on the grounde he byheld hys swerde, the best that ever was, named Durandal,

whych is as moche to say as gyvyng an hard stroke, whych was ryght fayr and rychely made: the handle was of fyn beryle shynynge mervaylously, on it it had a fayre crosse of gold in the whych was wryton the name of Jhesus. It was so good and fyn that sooner sholde the arme fayle than the swerde: he toke it oute of the shethe, and sawe it shyne moche bryght, and bycause it sholde chaunge hys maister he had moche sorowe in hys herte, and wepyng, he said in this maner pytously, 'O swerde of valure, the fayrest that ever was, thou were never but fayr, ne never fonde I the but good! Thou hast been so moche honoured that alway thou barest with the the name of the blessed Jhesus, sauvyour of the world, which has endowed the wyth the power of God. Who may comprehend thy valure! Alas, who shal have the after me! Whosomever hath the shall never be vanquysshed; alway shall he have good fortune! Alas, what shall I moreover say for the good swerde; many sarasyns have been destroyed by the; thynfydels and myscreaunts have ben slayn by the; the name of God is exalted by the; by the is made the path of sauvement! O how many tymes have I by the avenged thynjury made to God! O how many men have I smyton, and cutte asondre by the myddle! O my swerde whych has ben my comfort and my joye, whych never hurtest persone that myght escape fro deth. O my swerde, yf any persone of noo value sholde have the, and I knewe it, I sholde deye for sorowe!' After that Rolland had wept ynough he had fere that some paynym myght fynd it after hys deth. Wherefore he concluded in hymself to breke it, and toke it, and smote upon a rocke wyth all hys myght iii tymes wythout hurtyng any thyng the swerde, and cleft the rocke to therthe, and colde in no wyse breke the swerde. Whan he sawe the facyon, and colde do no more therto, he toke his horne whych was of yvorie moche rychely made, and sowned and blewe it moche strongly, to thende that yf there were any crysten men hyd in the wodes, or in the waye of theyr retournynge, that they sholde come to hym before they went any further, and tofore he rendered hys soule.

Then seyng that none came he sowned it ageyn by soo grete force and vertu, and soo impetously, that the horne roof asondre in the myddle, and the vaynes of hys necke braken asondre, and the synewes of hys bodye stretched. And that noyse or voys, by the grace of God came to the eeres of Charles, whych was eyght myles fro hym. The emperour heerynge the horne, he knewe well that Rolland had blowen it, and wolde have retorned ageyn; but Ganellon the traytre which knewe wel alle the fayt dystourned hym, in sayenge that Rolland had blowen hys horne for some wyld beest that he chaced for hys playsyr; for oft tyme he wold blowe hys horne for lytel thyng: and that he sholde not doubte of nothyng. And thus he dyd the kyng to understond, that he beleyyed hym and made none other semblaunt. Nevertheles Rolland beyng in thys sorowe, he peased hys woundes al so wel as he myght, and stretched himself on the grasse to the fressheness for to forget hys thurst, whych was over grete.

“Here upon Baulduyn hys brother came unto hym, whiche was moche hevy and soroweful for hys brother Rolland whych was in that necessitye. And anone Roulland sayd to hym, ‘My frende and my brother, I have so grete thurst that I must nedes dye yf I have not drynke to aswage my thurst.’

“Baulduyn had grete payn in goynge here and there, and colde fynde noo water, and came to hym ageyn, and sayde he colde fynde none; and in grete anguyss he lepte on Roulland’s hors, and rode for to fetch Charles; for he knewe wel that Roulland was nyghe hys deth. Anone after came to hym Thyerry duc of Ardayne, whych wept upon Roulland so continually, that he myght not speke but wyth gret payn. Rolland confessed hym and dysposed hym of hys conscience, nevertheles that same day Rolland had receyved the body of our Lord. For the custom was that the subgettes of Charles that day whych they sholde fyght, were confessed and comuned wythoute fayllinge by men of the chyrche, whych alway were wyth them. Rolland whych knewe hys ende by entyer contemplacyon, hys eyen lyfte up to heven, and hys

hondes joyned, al stratched in the medowe, began to say thus, 'Fayre Lorde God my maker, my redemour, son of the glorious moder of comfort, thou knowest myn entencyon, thou knowest what I have doon. For the bounte that is in the, by the grete mercy of whyche thou art envyrnonned, by the grace whych in the aboundeth, by the meryte of thy passyon holy and bytter, wyth a good and humble hert I requyre the that tofore the thys daye my faultes, synnes, and ygnoraunces may be pardoned to me. And take no regarde to the trespaces that I have doon to the, but beholde that I deye for the and in the fayth that thou hast ordeyned: remembre that thou hangest on the tree of the crosse for the synnars, and so as thou hast redeemed me, I beseech the that I be not loste. Alas, my maker God omnipotent, wyth good wyll I departed out of my countreie for to defend thy name, and for to mayntene crystendom. Thou knowest that I have suffred many angoysse of hungre, of thirst, of hete, of colde, and many mortal woundes. And day and nyght to the my God I yelde me culpable. I mystrust not thy mercy, thou art pytous, thou art comen for the synnars, thou pardonest Mary Magdalen and the good thief on the crosse because they retourned unto the; they were synnars as I am; lyke as they dyd, I crye for mercy, and better yf I colde say it. Thou byheldest how Abraham was obeyssaunt to the of hys sone Isaac, wherefore he ferde moche the better; byholde me how I am obedyent to the commaundements of the chyrche. I byleve in the, I love the above all other, I love my neyghbour. O good Lord, I beseeche the to pardone and forgive alle theym that thys daye ben deed in my companye, that they may be saved. Also my maker I requyre the to take heed of the pacyence of Job, for whych he was moche the better, that I deye here for thirst, and am alone. I am wounded mortally, and may not helpe myself; and take in pacyence alle the sorowe that I suffre, and am therwyth content when it pleaseth the. As all thys is trewe, pardone me, comforte my spyryte, receyve my soule, and brynge me to reste perdurable.' Whan Rolland had prayed thus, he sette hys

handes on hys bodye, holdyng hys flesshe, and after sayd thre tymes, 'Et in carne mea videbo Deum salvatorem meum,' and after layed hys handes on hys eyen, and sayd, 'Et oculi isti conspecturi sunt.' 'In thys flesshe that I hold I shall see my sauour, and these eyen shal behold hym : ' and after, he sayd, that he sawe thynges celestyall, whych the eyen of man myght not see, nor the eeres here, ne the hert thynke, the glory whych God hath maad redy to them that love hym. And in sayenge, 'In manus tuas Domine commendo spiritum meum,' 'Into thy handes, O Lord, I commende my spyryte, he layed hys armes upon his body in maner of a crosse, and gaf and rendred his soule to God the xvi kalends of Juyl.*

" OF the vysyon of the deth of Roulland, and of the sorowe of Charles. Capitulo liii.

" The day that Roulland the marter rendred hys soule unto God, I Turpyn, archbyssshop of Raymes, was in the valeye of Rounceyval, tofore Charles the Emperour, and sayde masse for the soules whych were passed out of thys world. And as I was in the secrete of the masse I was ravysshed, and herd the aungellys of heven synge and make grete melodye. And I wyst not what it might be, ne wherfore they soo dyd. And as I sawe the aungellys mount into heven on hye, I saw comynge a grete legyon of knyghtes alle blacke ageynst me, the whych bere a praye whereof they made grete noyse. Whan they were tofore me in passynge, I sayd to them, and demaunded who they were, and what they bare. One of the deveylls aunswered and sayd, we bere the kyng Marfuryus into helle, for long agoon he hath well deserved it. And Roulland your trumpette, wyth Michel thanngel, and many other in his companye, is brought into joye perdurable to heven. And as the masse was fynnyshed, I recounted to Charles the vysyon whyche I had seen, how thaungellys of heven bare the soule of Roulland into

* June 16

Paradys, and the devylles bare the soule of a sarasyn into helle. Thus as I sayde these wordes Baulduyn whyche rode on Rolland's hors came hastely, and sayd to Charles how the crysten men were dede and bytrayed, and how Rolland was hurte, and in what estate he had left hym."

CHAPTER IX.



Salamis—Siege of Leyden—Spanish Armada.

WHILE Leonidas was guarding Thermopylæ, the Grecian fleet took its station nearly opposite to him at Artemisium and the coast of Eubœa. The Euripus, the narrow channel extending between that island and the continent, was well calculated for defence by an inferior force ; and as the voyage along the seaward side of the island was considered difficult and dangerous in the imperfection of ancient navigation, a reasonable hope was entertained that the progress of the invader might be stopped both by land and sea. His fleet originally consisted of 1208 galleys of war, besides transports and smaller vessels, and

had been reinforced by 120 ships from the Thracian Greeks; but this vast armament was considerably reduced on the coast of Thessaly, by a storm, in which, according to the lowest report, not less than four hundred galleys were destroyed. Numerically, the Grecian fleet was little calculated to engage such an enemy, for it reckoned but 271 trireme galleys, with a few of the smaller vessels called penteconters. "The penteconter, the vessel of Homer's age, had, like the modern row-boat, only one tier of oars, and its complement of rowers was from fifty to sixty. The trireme, it is generally supposed, had three tiers of oars, by which it gained that swiftness so important in the ancient mode of naval action. Its ordinary complement of rowers was, at the time of which we are treating, from 150 to 160; besides whom it commonly carried forty soldiers, and sometimes more, but on emergencies, particularly when boarded, the whole crew acted with arms."* Of the triremes now in the Grecian fleet, no less than 127 were furnished by Athens, and 40 by Corinth; the rest were supplied in smaller quotas by the other Peloponnesians and islanders. With this superiority in force the Athenians were fully entitled to claim the chief command: but such was the reputation of Sparta at this time, that the Peloponnesian states refused to serve except under a Spartan leader; and the Athenians, with a rare and most laudable moderation, waived their claim rather than run the hazard of discord at so critical a moment. The credit of this forbearance is ascribed to Themistocles.

The Grecian commanders felt their inferiority of force, and were as willing to abandon the Euboeans to their fate, as shortly after to desert the Athenians. The former petitioned Eurybiades, the Spartan admiral, to remain awhile for their protection, until they could remove their families and portable effects. Failing in their application, they went to Themistocles, the Athenian admiral, who for thirty talents, about 7000*l.*, promised to detain the fleet; and succeeded, for Eurybiades was brought

* Mitford, chap. viii., sect. 4.

over by five, and the Corinthian commander by three talents; the rest appears to have been converted to his own use. Disinterestedness is not to be reckoned among the many brilliant qualities of Themistocles: but his interference, however corrupt in its origin, was wise and beneficial; for to retreat from Artemisium would have been equivalent to deserting the army, and most injurious to the common cause. The Persian commanders, seeing the small force opposed to them, were chiefly afraid lest it should escape, and detached two hundred galleys round Eubœa to blockade the other end of the Euripus, and cut off all retreat. Meanwhile, three battles, unattended with any decisive result, were fought, in all of which the Greeks appear to have gained the advantage, and their spirits were heightened by a reinforcement of fifty-three Athenian triremes, bringing news that the detachment sent round Eubœa had been overtaken by a storm and totally destroyed. But they were severely handled in the last engagement; and the news of the battle of Thermopylæ determined them to retreat nearer to their homes. Previous to his departure, Themistocles engraved these words upon the rocks at the watering place of Artemisium: "Men of Ionia, you do ill in making war upon your fathers, and helping to enslave Greece.* By all means therefore come over to us, or, if that cannot be, remain neuter, and persuade the Carians to do the same. But if the necessity which compels you to the part you are engaged in is such as to make a secession impracticable, yet, when we come to action, avoid exertion against us; remembering that you are descended from one blood with us, and that the enmity of the Persians was first drawn upon us in your cause." In this he probably had a double object: if possible, to induce the Asiatic Greeks to desert; and if not, at least

* All Grecian colonies held the metropolis, or mother city, whence they were derived, in deep veneration. The Ionian states were founded by a great migration from Attica, and therefore looked up to the Athenians as the head of their tribe.

to render them suspected, and procure their exclusion in future from the Persian line.

The fleet doubling the promontory of Sunium, the southern point of Attica, took its second station in the bay of Salamis; a situation recommended to the Athenians by its proximity to their capital; and to the Peloponnesians by the neighbourhood of the Isthmus, the key of Peloponnesus. It was here recruited by fresh ships, so that the fleet now mustered 372 triremes, of which 180 were Athenian. The Athenians expected, with good reason, that the whole strength of Peloponnesus would assemble in Bœotia for the protection of Attica, and were thrown into great consternation on finding themselves deserted, and that their Dorian neighbours had returned to their favourite scheme of fortifying the Isthmus, and there making their final stand. No hope remained, except in unconditional submission or flight, and in this dilemma the people came to the high-minded resolution of abandoning their homes and fortunes to the invader, and seeking a temporary refuge in the neighbouring islands of Salamis and Ægina, and the territory of Troezen on the opposite coast of the Saronic gulf. Still, when the time arrived, they were unwilling to move, until Themistocles, never at a loss for expedients, called the influence of superstition to his aid. It was believed that a sacred serpent kept watch over Pallas's temple in the Acropolis. Every month a preparation of honey was placed before the shrine, and believed to be devoured by the animal: but the last offering, the priestess said, remained untouched, and hence the inference was drawn, that the goddess had deserted her city, which availed much towards reconciling the people to depart. Proclamation was therefore made, that the city should be committed to the charge of Pallas the protectress, and that all men of age to serve should embark on board the triremes, having provided for the security of their families as best they might. All complied, except some who were too poor to support themselves in a foreign land, and a few who, putting confidence in an ambiguous oracle, believed safety to be promised to such

as remained in the Acropolis. A law was passed for the recall of all exiles.

Meanwhile the Persian land-force advanced from Thermopylæ unopposed through Doris into Phocis, which alone, says Herodotus, "among the states in that quarter, did not join the Mede, for no other cause, as far as I can find upon inquiry, but from their hatred to the Thesalians; for if the Thessalians had adhered to the cause of Greece, the Phocians, as I believe, would then have joined the Mede." But they could not pretend to withstand such an overwhelming force, and, retiring from the level country, took refuge in the recesses of Mount Parnassus; and the invader carried fire and desolation through the rich but deserted vale of the Cephissus. Arriving at the Bœotian border, Xerxes, while he prosecuted his march towards Athens, detached a force to seize the treasure at Delphi, "with the contents of which," says the historian, "he was better acquainted than with what he had left at home; so general was its celebrity, especially for the offerings dedicated by Cræsus, son of Alyattes. The citizens were naturally in great alarm both for themselves and their temple, and consulted the oracle whether they should conceal or remove the sacred deposits. The god forbade their interference, saying that he was able to defend his own: but their confidence in their patron seems not to have been un-mixed with scepticism, for they transported their families across the Corinthian Gulf into Achaia, and betook themselves to the wilds of Parnassus and other strongholds, leaving in the place only Aceratus, the expounder of oracles, together with sixty men.

"When the barbarians were near at hand, and beheld the temple, at that moment the prophet observed that the sacred arms which it was unlawful for any man to touch had been brought forth from the shrine and laid in front of the building;* and he went to tell the Delphians, who were there, this wonder. But greater marvels occurred when the Persians came opposite to the temple of

* A similar event is related to have occurred at Thebes, before the battle of Leuctra.

Athene Pronaia; though it is no small wonder that armour should spontaneously change its place; but that which next happened, among all manner of prodigies is most worthy of admiration: for then thunderbolts fell from heaven among them, and two crags, broken from Parnassus, were borne amongst them with a dreadful crash, and slew many; while a noise of shouting was heard from the temple of the goddess.

“From these things combined a panic seized the barbarians; and the Delphians, observing that they retreated, issued down and slew a considerable number; the rest fled straight to Bœotia. And those who returned said, as I hear, that they saw other prodigies besides, for that two warriors of more than mortal stature followed their retreat, slaying them. These the Delphians affirm to have been two heroes, natives of the country, Phylacus and Antinous, to whom ground is consecrated in the neighbourhood of the temple.”*

It is curious that two hundred years later, when the Gauls invaded Greece and attacked Delphi, the same answer was returned by the oracle, and the assailants were again defeated in consequence of a panic terror.† Stripped of the miraculous, these stories seem to denote that the measures of the Delphian leaders were prudent and successful. The first step was to inspire confidence, which was done by a favourable oracle, and by the reported supernatural removal of the armour; the next, to provide for defence,—and the plan adopted is indicated by the seasonable descent of the rocks. Suppose also that a thunderstorm did really occur thus seasonably, and the whole miraculous tale will be readily and credibly explained.

The main body of the army advanced through Bœotia, which now openly espoused the Persian cause, burning on their way the patriotic towns of Thespiæ and Plataea, and took possession of deserted Athens. The few who had sought refuge in the Acropolis, trusting in the oracle, alone refused submission, and, owing to the natural

* Herod. viii. 37 and 38.

† History of Greece, p. 166.

strength of the fortress, were not reduced without considerable trouble.

The fleet had been with difficulty detained thus long at Salamis, and now the enemy's approach inspired general consternation: some hurried to their ships to seek safety in immediate flight; and a council being called, it was resolved by the majority of those who remained to retreat to the Isthmus, where, if defeated, they would have the support and protection of their countrymen. This was a consideration of no small importance, for the ancient vessels drew so little water, that they could be run close ashore before they grounded; and it has happened that ships so abandoned, and even taken possession of by the enemy, have been recovered by the opportune arrival of succours by land, who have dashed into the sea and overpowered the intruders. Mnesiphilus, an Athenian, met Themistocles departing from the assembly, and having heard what was determined, observed, "Then you have no longer a country to fight for: the fleet will separate: neither Eurybiades nor any one else will have power to retain it together, and Greece is ruined by lack of counsel." Struck by the justice of his friend's views, Themistocles returned to the Spartan admiral, and persuaded him to reassemble the council; and in his eagerness, before Eurybiades, as commander-in-chief, had explained the purpose for which they were met, he proceeded earnestly and at great length to enforce the impolicy of a retreat, when Adeimantus, the Corinthian captain, stopped him with the affronting reproof, "Themistocles, in the games men are beaten with rods who rise before their time." He replied temperately, "But those who are left behind are never crowned," and continued to urge the inexpediency of their present determination. "If they retreated," he said, "they would give up Salamis, Megara, Ægina, thus leading the Persians to the very gates of Peloponnesus; and be obliged to risk a battle in the open sea, which would be doubly prejudicial to an armament inferior both in the number and the swiftness of its vessels. By remaining, on the contrary, they gained the advantage of fighting in a strait;

they preserved Salamis, where were the families of a large part of the Athenians; and protected Peloponnesus as effectually as if they fell back and fought at the Isthmus, without committing the error of suffering the enemy to advance unopposed so far. Moreover, if they obtained the victory, there was reason to expect that the enemy would never advance beyond Attica; and thus they would preserve from ravage Megara, Ægina, and above all Salamis, which was marked out by an oracle as the spot where they should overcome their enemy. Here Adeimantus again attacked him, bidding him be silent, as a man without a country, and objected to Eurybiades putting the proposal of one without a city to the vote; saying that Themistocles must first show what city he represented, then come and compare his own with others' opinions. Themistocles replied in anger, with bitter taunts against Adeimantus and the Corinthians, that the Athenians possessed both the better country and the better city, so long as they had two hundred ships equipped for service, which no Grecian power, go where they would, could repel. He then turned to Eurybiades, and spoke with great earnestness. "If you abide here, and abiding, shall approve your courage—well: if not, you will be the ruin of Greece. For our ships bear the burden of the war. Be advised by me therefore. If not, we will immediately take our domestics, and make sail for Siris in Italy, which of old time is ours, and as oracles say is destined to be colonised by us: and you being abandoned by allies such as we are, will remember my words." The concluding argument was irresistible, and they resolved to remain.*

The next morning an earthquake occurred at sunrise; upon which it was resolved to implore the favour and protection of Æacus,† and the heroes descended from

* Herod. viii. 60, 62.

† Æacus, son of Jupiter and Ægina, was king of the island to which he gave his mother's name. From him sprung Peleus and Telamon, with their descendants Achilles, Pyrrhus, Ajax, &c.

him, whose assistance, according to Grecian superstition, was especially to be depended on in those seas, where they had reigned, and where they were peculiarly worshipped. They paid their vows on the spot to Ajax and Telamon, in their native Salamis, and sent a vessel to offer the same tribute to the other heroes of the family at Ægina; and the appeal was believed, or at least fabled, to have been answered. One Dicaeus, an Athenian exile high in the Persian service, asserted that one day, when he was in the Thriasian plain, which stretched from Eleusis northward, in company with Demaratus, the banished king of Sparta, who followed in Xerxes' train, and was much consulted by the monarch throughout this war, they saw a cloud of dust, such as might be raised by the trampling of 30,000 men, advance from Eleusis. As they were wondering what this might be, they heard a noise, which seemed to him to be the song which the initiated* sang in praise of the mystic Iacchus. Dicaeus then assured his companion that some great evil was about to befall the Persians; for the gods were manifestly quitting Eleusis on the desolation of Attica to proceed to the assistance of the Greeks, and if they should direct their course towards Peloponnesus, the blow would fall on the land army; if towards Salamis, then Xerxes would run great risk of losing his fleet. Demaratus wisely counselled him to keep silent, or his head might be in no less danger than the Persian marine; and presently the

* Eleusis was famed for the celebration of mysteries, as they were called; which consisted in leading the aspirant through various terrific scenes and representations; after which, if his courage remained unshaken, he was instructed in a purer and more exalted system of religion than was openly taught in Greece. Secrecy on the part of the initiated was most strictly enforced. The immortality of the soul appears to have been the leading doctrine inculcated in these ceremonies; which seem traceable to the earliest periods of Grecian history, and were probably derived from Egypt. The initiated went yearly in solemn procession from Athens to Eleusis, and chaunted on these occasions the hymns alluded to.

dust rose into a cloud, which was borne off in the direction of Salamis ! *

The losses of the Persian fleet by storm and battle were repaired by reinforcements drawn from the islanders, Bœotians and others, upon its arrival at Phalerum, one of the ports of Athens. Xerxes in person presided at a council of war, when it was debated whether the fortune of another battle should be tried or no. All raised their voices in the affirmative, except Artemisia, a Grecian heroine, daughter of Lygdamis, and widow of another tyrant of Halicarnassus, who had joined the fleet with five galleys, which she herself commanded, attended regularly at the council board, and was high in the favour of the Persian monarch. She urged him to spare his ships, and not engage with an enemy as superior to his troops at sea as men to women ; and said that nothing was to be gained by a battle, for he was already in possession of Attica, the great object of the campaign ; and the adverse fleet, if he only remained quiet, would soon be compelled to disperse for want of provisions ; while, if he advanced by land against Peloponnesus, it would immediately separate, and all would fly to their several homes, without caring to stay and fight in defence of the

* The correspondence between the above story and the following Spanish legend is singularly close.—“The night before the battle was fought at the Navas de Tolosa, in the dead of the night a mighty sound was heard in the whole city of Leon, as if it had been the tramp of a whole army passing through : and it went on to the royal monastery of St. Isidro, and there was great knocking at the gate thereof ; and they called to a priest who was keeping vigil in the church, and told him that the captains of the army which he heard were the Cid Ruy Diaz, and Count Ferran Gouzalet ; and that they came to call up King Don Fernando the Great, who lay buried in that church, that he might go with them to deliver Spain. And on the morrow that great battle of the Navas de Tolosa was fought, wherein 60,000 of the unbelievers were slain, which was one of the greatest and noblest battles ever won over the Moors.”—Chronicle of Cid, xi. 21. It occurred A.D. 1212.

Athenians. Xerxes acknowledged the advice to be good, but was guided by the opinion of the majority; and attributing former defeats to the want of his personal presence and encouragement, he determined to be a spectator of the battle, which was ordered to take place upon the morrow. That same night the land forces marched towards the Isthmus, which so much alarmed the Peloponnesians, already discontented and uneasy lest they should be defeated and blockaded in Salamis, that the indecision of Eurybiades was loudly reprobated, and it was tumultuously resolved not to stay to risk a battle in behalf of an already conquered country. In this crisis Themistocles had recourse to a measure singularly illustrative of the bold and crooked policy which he loved to pursue. He despatched a trusty dependant to the hostile fleet, to say that the Athenian admiral, being well disposed to the king, had sent him to give information that the Greeks were on the point of flight; and that now was the time to strike a decisive blow, because they were at variance with each other, and in an engagement many would espouse the Persian cause. The bait was taken; the Persians landed a detachment on the little islet of Psyttaleia, lying between Salamis and the main, to overpower the crews of any vessels that might be driven ashore there, and sent a force round Salamis to occupy the other end of the strait between that islet and the continent, in which the Greeks were posted, and thus deprive them of the possibility of retreat. All this passed in the course of one evening, during which the dissensions of the Greeks, ignorant that they were blockaded, had protracted their council to a late hour of the night, when Aristides, surnamed the Just, a man hostile above all others to Themistocles, and who, through his influence, had been banished from Athens, came to help his country in her distress as he best might, and forgot all private animosity in her service. Sailing from Ægina, he fell in with the enemy; and having heard that the Peloponnesians were urgent to retreat upon the Isthmus, he called Themistocles out from the assembly and addressed him thus: "It becomes us to contend, both at other sea-

sons and at this also, which of us two shall most benefit his country." He added that they were now surrounded, and that deliberation concerning flight was vain, because Eurybiades and the Corinthians could not depart if they would: and bid Themistocles inform the assembly of this. Themistocles avowed in return that this was done by his own contrivance, adding, that since the Greeks would not fight of their own good will, it was necessary to compel them; and bid Aristides himself carry in the tidings to the council. While the dispute still raged, some believing, others rejecting the intelligence, it was confirmed by a Tenian vessel which deserted from the enemy.

At break of day, October 20th, B.C. 480, if we may trust implicitly to chronologers, they prepared for battle, and were no sooner in motion than the Persians advanced to meet them, Xerxes being stationed at the foot of Mount *Ægaleos*, near the port *Phoron*,* on a spot which commanded a view of the scene of action. The wind at that hour mostly blew fresh from the sea, and rolled up a strong current; two circumstances which gave the low-built Grecian ships a decided advantage over their loftier and more unwieldy opponents. For a naval conflict was chiefly carried on by means of the iron beaks with which vessels' bows were armed, the great object being to strike an enemy upon the side, and thus, if the shock were direct and violent, sink her altogether, or at all events dash away her oars, and thus render her unmanageable. It was therefore of vital importance that they should readily obey the helm. Now a side wind had little effect upon the Grecian ships, but it disordered the Persian, which were built high in the bows and stern, to procure the advantage in a close engagement, when, as was the older usage, ship grappled with ship, and the issue, as in a land battle, depended chiefly upon the exertions of the heavy-armed soldiers: and by disordering them, it at once broke the momentum of their charge, and exposed them to what was so much dreaded, an oblique attack.

* See Col. Leake on the Attic Demi.

The Greeks, when fairly confronted with the first mass of the hostile fleet, were seized with something like a panic; and reversing the action of their oars fell back toward the land, still keeping their prows turned towards the enemy. Ameinias, brother to the poet Æschylus, and to Cynægirus, who was slain at Marathon after distinguishing his valour, broke the spell by dashing singly into the hostile ranks; and the rest then followed his example. It was said that at this moment a female figure appearing in the air gave the word to charge loud enough for the whole fleet to hear, exclaiming reproachfully, "How long for shame will ye yet back your vessels?" The event, however, seems not to have been very long doubtful. The Persians came to the attack without order, so that when the first line was routed, fresh ships crowding up from the rear, and eager to distinguish themselves under the eyes of their sovereign, ran foul of their comrades, and thus completing their wreck, were themselves thrown into confusion, and rendered unable to attack in concert, and with any probability of success. Numbers of ships were driven ashore on Salamis and destroyed, and while the action was going on Aristides landed with a body of troops upon the island Psyttaleia, and put to the sword all the Persians who were there, under the very eye of their monarch. When the Persians began to fall into confusion, the ship of Artemisia was hard pressed by an Athenian galley commanded by Ameinias, who had commenced the action, and was one of the three who were considered to have acquitted themselves best in the conflict. Being unable to retreat for the press of friendly vessels, she steered against the ship of Damasithymus, prince of Calynda in Lycia, and sunk him outright. Whether chance directed her against his vessel, or whether she selected it on account of any previous ill will, the historian professes his inability to inform us; the stratagem at least succeeded, for the Athenian took it for granted that he was pursuing one of his own side by mistake, and turned to seek some other enemy. On seeing this feat, Xerxes, who was eager to inquire by whom each action

worthy of observation was performed, expressed his admiration, supposing that it was a foe that had perished, and said that his men had turned women, and his women men. No historian has attempted to give a detailed account of such a scene of confusion as the battle must have presented, nor has any statement of the respective losses of the combatants been preserved. We may presume that of the Persians to have been immense, not only from the strong expression of *Æschylus*,* that the sea was scarce visible for the wrecks and gore which overspread it, and that the shores were covered with corpses, but from knowing that, when collected the next spring at Samos, their fleet numbered only 300 vessels. Immediately after the battle the remnant of the armament re-

* In the *Persæ*, a tragedy written to celebrate the overthrow of Xerxes, and containing a magnificent description of the battle of Salamis, of which the poet was an eye-witness, having served in all the brilliant actions of the Persian war, from Marathon to Platea. The passage is too long for the whole to be inserted, but the description of the first onset of the Greeks may furnish a specimen of its character.

“ But when the white-horsed morn o’er all the earth
Shed her fair splendour, from the Grecian fleet
A mighty sound rose tuneably, to wake
The sleeping Echo, which returned a loud
Heart-cheering answer from the island rock.
Confused the Persians stood; for not for flight
The Greeks rang forth that lofty battle-shout,
But hurrying on rejoicing to the fight
With high-souled valour. Then the trumpet’s clang
Kindled the battle; then the word was given,
And the quick oars with one united stroke
Dashed into spray the salt resounding surge,
And all bore down in sight. The right wing led
First, in fair order; the main armament
Pressed close behind, and all at once sent forth
A mighty shout; ‘ On, children of the Greeks,
Set free your country, free your sons, your wives,
The temples of your country’s gods, the tombs
Of your forefathers—this day fights for all.’ ”

turned to the Hellespont, so broken in spirit, that upon the sight of a few rocks lying near the promontory Zoster, the most projecting point on the western coast of Attica, they mistook them for the enemy, and dispersed in dismay.

The supernatural appearance at the moment of commencing the engagement is mentioned by Herodotus in terms that leave it doubtful whether it was a fiction propagated in the heat of action to remove a timidity fatal to the Grecian cause, or the growth of later times. If the former, it is a stratagem creditable to the ready wit of him who invented it, unless we rather believe it to have been a preconcerted fraud on the part of the Athenian commanders. The example of Pisistratus will prove that such a fraud was not alien to the character of the Athenians; and a similar story is related of Pericles, not half a century later. That eminent general and statesman, previous to a battle, observed a dark and extensive wood, consecrated to Pluto, situated so as to be visible to both armies alike. Within its shelter he stationed a man of extraordinary stature, whose appearance was rendered more imposing by all that dress and equipage could supply. His natural height increased by high-soled buskins, clothed in purple, and with flowing hair, he was placed in a lofty chariot drawn by white horses, with orders to advance upon the signal of battle being given, and call upon Pericles by name, and exhort him to confidence by the assurance that the gods were on the Athenian side. The effect was such that the enemy scarce waited for the first flight of javelins to turn their backs.* Not less useful to the Spanish cause was the belief that Santiago fought upon their side against the Moors. Ramiro, king of Arragon, had fought a whole day with the Moors: darkness separated the combatants, and preserved the Christian power from destruction. The king

* Frontinus, *Strategematicon*, lib. I. ii. 10. Frontinus wrote towards the end of the first century of the Christian era, and the story, as far as we know, is not noticed earlier. It may therefore very probably be false.

having spent the first part of the night in deep anxiety concerning the fate of the morrow, was at length overtaken by sleep, and in a dream saw one who bade him be of good cheer, for that assuredly the Christians would gain the victory; and declared himself to be the Apostle James, to whose ward Spain was committed, and whose protection they should experience on the morrow provided they pacified their minds by wholesome confession, and, fortified with the holy sacrament, advanced with a firm hope to the renewal of the fray. The king communicated his dream to the prelates and barons, who hailed the assurance with joy, and having obeyed the saint's injunctions, charged the Saracens in the name of God and St. James with such alacrity, that 60,000 were left dead upon the field. The apostle himself was conspicuous amidst the fight, mounted on a white horse, with a snow-white banner, charged with a red cross. From that time it has been usual with the Spaniards in all battles, especially with unbelievers and heathens, to call upon the name of God and St. James, which serves them for their watch-word.*

This disaster put a final stop to the advance of the Persians. Xerxes, wearied and discouraged by a series of misfortunes, willingly listened to a proposal, that he should return himself to Persia with the bulk of the army, and leave his brother-in-law, Mardonius, with 300,000 picked men, to complete the reduction of Greece. One story runs, that he crossed the Hellespont without fleet or army in an open boat: but not the smallest countenance is given by Herodotus to this report, which probably has no other foundation than the practice common to story-tellers in all ages, of adding ornament to what is in itself sufficiently striking. His retreat was protected by 60,000 men detached by Mardonius; but the sufferings of the multitude who followed him, and of whom no care could be taken, were dreadful. They left behind them a track, like that of locusts; even the grass and bark of trees were devoured; and

* Vassæus, *Hispaniæ Chronicon*.

disease, the natural consequence of cold and hunger, carried off thousands whom the sword and famine had spared.

Xerxes seems to have entirely abandoned Attica, so that the Athenians returned without further contest to their homes : not, indeed, to enjoy them in quiet, but to give a fresh example of disinterestedness and devotion to the cause of their allies requited by ingratitude little short of treachery. Mardonius wintered in Thessaly, but, early in the spring, he sent ambassadors to detach, if possible, Athens from the Grecian cause. Xerxes, he said, had ordered him to announce that their offences should be fully forgiven, their territory restored, and increased by any other which they might choose, their temples rebuilt, and their independence secured, if they would only make submission to the king. "Why then," he added, "are you so frenzied as to continue a war, in which you cannot conquer, nor yet resist for ever? For you know the multitude and the exploits of Xerxes' army, and have heard what force is now under my command; and if you should vanquish me, which, however, you have no ground to hope, still you will be attacked by another armament many times as great." The friendly envoy, Alexander, king of Macedonia, in vain added his own persuasions to these tempting offers: the reply is worthy of being preserved. "We know that the power of the Mede is many times greater than our own, so that it was unnecessary to reproach us therewith; but yet, being ardently desirous of liberty, we will defend ourselves as best we may. Tell Mardonius, therefore, that the Athenians say, so long as the sun shall run his present course, we never will submit ourselves to Xerxes, but will march against him, relying on the gods, who fight for us, and the heroes; whose temples and images he, holding them in no respect, has burnt." To the Lacedæmonians, who sent a pressing embassy to remind them of their obligations to support the confederate cause, and, professing sympathy and regret for the losses which they had sustained, offered to support their women and those who were unserviceable

for war, they replied in a similar tone, that no wealth should bribe them to be accessory to the enslaving of Greece; and that to avenge the insulted honour of their gods was a sacred duty: they declined, though with thanks, the offer of assistance to support their families, and only requested, that since their reply would unquestionably produce an immediate invasion, the Lacedæmonians would be ready at the first notice to march into Bœotia, and save them, if possible, from being again obliged to abandon their country.*

In return for this devotion, the Spartans, as before, suffered Mardonius unopposed to occupy Attica, and, unmoved by the pressing entreaties of the Athenians, they remained at home, until it was suggested that to fortify the Isthmus would be of little use, if the sea were left free to the barbarians by the defection of the better half of the Grecian fleet. This observation produced immediate effect, and an army of 5000 Spartans and 35,000 Helots was instantly despatched, though not until the Persian invasion had again compelled the Athenians to remove their families and effects to Salamis. Mardonius, finding the Athenians immovable, burnt the city, which he had hitherto spared, and retreated into Bœotia, as offering a better field for the evolutions of his cavalry. There this eventful war was closed by the glorious victory of Platæa.

But it is not to Salamis and to Platæa that we wish especially to direct the reader's admiration, for military virtue is a plant of hardy and extensive growth. It is the spectacle of a nation once and again quitting an endeared home (and there is much of misery comprised in these few words) in preference to owning a foreign master; and persevering in its exalted course, unchanged even by the ingratitude and injustice of those countrymen for whose welfare, conjointly with its own liberty, it rejected the most tempting offers of wealth and security, to which we look as the best justification of those high-flown eulogiums which the later Athenians

* Herod., viii. c. 140—144.

bestowed so liberally upon their ancestors. In seeking for a parallel case in modern history, the conflagration of Moscow at once suggests itself; but the obscurity which involves the origin of that remarkable and important event renders it impossible to determine how far the same spirit prompted the one and the other sacrifice; and the recent occurrence and notoriety of the latter furnishes an additional reason for passing it over. In its place, therefore, we shall select the most striking incident, perhaps, in the long and glorious war waged by the Low Countries for the recovery of their liberties:—the siege of Leyden, in the year 1574, when the Dutch, in greater straits than the Athenians, and unable either to defend or abandon their country, called in the powers of nature to their assistance, and sank it under the waters, rather than surrender its strongholds to the Spanish tyrant.

“Now follows the Siege of Leyden, which was particularly memorable for the condition of the succour, which so altered the order of affairs, as the besiegers became besieged; and look,—what unhappy success the assailed expected, the assailant made trial of the very same. Leyden is one of the chief towns of Holland; it is seated low, amongst, as may be said, a labyrinth of channels, part of which are running, part standing waters, and which cut through the territories thereof on all sides. The Rhine runs through it with one of its branches, which now is the weakest, but hath formerly been the most frequented; though this retain its ancient name, whereas the rest, as they draw near the sea, change it into that of other rivers. So many other channels are derived from this branch within the town itself in several parts, as the space, which is there broken off by the islands, is in a sort larger than what is united to the continent. But if it be divided by so many channels, it is rejoined by many more bridges. Of which there are about an hundred and fifty, where they may serve either for use or ornament; and the most of them are of stone. The town is well peopled; her streets are large buildings, well polished; it is well

flanked round about; her ditch is everywhere deep; and in fine she is in all circumstances of such condition, as the king's men had good reason to use all endeavours to gain her, as also the rebels to keep possession of her.

“The royalists betook themselves with diligence to be masters of all avenues, whereby succour might be kept from the town. The parts thereabouts (as hath been said) are full of channels and rivers: wherefore it was thought necessary to block up all passages with sundry forts, by which the city might be come to, either by land or water; so as, ere long, there were little less than sixty forts built round about it, whereby almost all possibility of relieving it was taken away. The Leydenists this meanwhile were not wanting on their parts in preparing for defence. And judging that the royalists intended rather to take the town by famine than by the sword, they thought it not convenient to receive many foreign soldiers into the city; as well the longer to preserve their victuals, as for that they hoped they had men enough of their own to maintain and defend it.*

“John Douza, a famous Latin poet in those days, very nobly born, and of other high deserts, had the chief government of the affairs of the city. He failed not in acting his part well; he still encouraged the Leydenists, and fed them with hopes that the other cities would speedily join with them, and relieve them. In

* The citizens replied to a summons to surrender, that they would not lack food, while their left arms remained, but feed on them, and fight for liberty with their right. *Strada, de Bello Belgico, lib. viii.* Vaunts of this kind are dangerous: the Leydenists, however, did no discredit to theirs. It was a maxim of the Maréchal de Grammont, that a governor who began by making a great to-do, and burnt his suburbs to make a brilliant defence, generally ended by making a very bad one. See the *Mémoires de Grammont*, chap. viii., where there is a capital story of the gallant defence of Lerida, by Don Gregorio Brice, bearing upon this point.

confirmation of this, sometimes letters, sometimes messages came from without, and some news was cunningly raised within the town itself: though it were very true, that Orange and the rest of the rebels in that province laboured nothing more than how to keep a place of such consequence still at their devotion. 'Twas now the month of August; and the Leydenists began already to suffer want of victuals. Therefore the states of the country met to treat of so weighty a business, and to find out some way whereby the city might be relieved; and this affair began to be mightily earnest. The deputies differed in their opinions, some thought that the town might be the easiest got into by making a gallant assault by land, others held it might better be relieved by some river or channel; but the greatest part concluded that there was small hopes of doing it either one way or other, the king's men having so strongly fortified themselves everywhere. Lewis Boisot, admiral of Holland, chanced to be at this meeting; a man very expert in maritime affairs, of a manlike spirit and good at execution; and one who was very well esteemed of over all the province. He, whilst they were hottest in the variety of their opinions, stepped forth to propound his, and began to speak thus:—

“ ‘I wish that our own misfortunes did not too deplorably teach us how perverse the fury of the sea proves sometimes to our countries. Who sees not how we are daily inforced to oppose our industry to the threats thereof? Nor have our mountainous banks been sufficient so to curb the tempest of her waves, but that sometime she hath swallowed up whole islands on some sides, and caused miserable and unheard-of ruins in other parts. We are now to seek for remedy, in this our present necessity, from these evils which do so often afflict us. Let nature work the same effect to-day, for our good, which she useth upon so many other occasions to do for our hurt. And by those weapons wherewith she makes war against us, let us by her example make war upon our enemies. Every one knows that at the two equinoxials of the year the ocean swells extraordinary

high upon our coasts ; and, by the season of the year, we are shortly to expect the effects thereof. My counsel shall therefore be, that we may immediately, at the high tides, begin to let the waters loose into the neighbouring ground of Leyden : greater tides will hereafter follow. And thus, turning the siege upon the besiegers, we may hope to destroy our enemies within their own works, and at the same time to free the city from all danger. It may be thought impossible to relieve it by land, or by the ordinary way of channels or rivers ; whereas, by the way which I have prescribed, we may believe that our enterprise will be smiled on by success. It will be in our power to let in the inundation where we please. We shall see the enemy strangely astonished and confused between the shame of abandoning the siege and the horror of continuing it. But being forced at last to fly, we shall see our own weapons and those of nature conspire together in slaughtering them on all sides ; and shall see that punishment justly transferred on them which they with open violence prepared for the innocent. The country which shall be drowned will doubtlessly be somewhat indamaged thereby ; but who would not bear with such an inconvenience, whereby their country shall receive so great a benefit ? On the contrary, whose hair will not stand on end to think, that, after the loss of Harlem and of Leyden, all the whole province will shortly remain at the cruel will of the Spaniards ? We must sometimes be wicked to be good. How oft do we cut off some one member for the welfare and safeguard of the rest of the body ? Yet this evil will not prove finally so great, but that it will in time be paid with great usury. Some worldly actions prove so memorable, as they strike envy dumb and add new tongues to fame. This of ours will certainly be such, and will be everywhere highly celebrated. I, who so boldly give the advice, do as confidently pronounce the augury ; and hope that the event will crown both of them with fortunate success.

“ At the hearing of so strange a proposition, the deputies were much confused, whether they should

accept of it or reject it. But it is oft-times seen that need, passing into necessity, necessity passeth luckily into desperation. And thus it proved in what we shall now relate. For all of them, joining at last in opinion that Leyden was not to be freed by any other way than by what Boisot had propounded, it was resolved that at all adventures, they would follow his advice. The chief banks or ditches of the Meuse and Isell between Rotterdam and Tergowe, were presently cut in divers places; and at the high tide the waters began to break in everywhere, and overflow all the grounds which lie between Tergowe, Rotterdam, Delf, and Leyden. At the sight of this unlooked-for inundation, the Spaniards were at first much astonished; but they were soon aware of the enemies' design. The king's forts were very many, as we have said, and divers of them were seated in the lowest places. These the inundation did quickly reach, and therefore they were quickly forsaken, and those who kept them went to join with those that kept the chiefest forts, which were so placed as they might be the more easily maintained. This meanwhile, when once the enemy had pitched upon the aforesaid resolution, they applied themselves apace to get together great store of vessels which should be fitting to relieve Leyden. They were very careful to build them with shallow bottoms, to the end that they might pass over such grounds where the waters were shallowest: the greatest part of them were built in Rotterdam by reason of the nearness and opportunity of its situation. Whole Holland was in great expectation what the success would prove, and therefore people flocked from all parts to help to build boats; many of which were to be in the form of galleys with oars, to the end that they might the easier get by the passes, and assault the forts, which were yet in the royalists' possession. These boats were therefore furnished with many pieces of artillery, and such people as were judged fit to fight. Whilst they were making this preparation, the admiral of Holland endeavoured, with some ships prepared for that purpose, to force certain passes, and to bring some succour into Leyden; for the

besieged suffered very much for want of victuals, and did very earnestly solicit succour. But his design did not at that time take effect ; for the waters were not yet so far increased, as that his vessels could come near Leyden. All Holland joined therefore in their prayers, that the sea might suddenly swell higher ; and that the province, by raising the siege of Leyden, might receive so desired a misfortune.

“ On the other side, the king’s men were not wanting in securing their forts, and repairing them with earth, hay, and whatsoever else they could come by of most commodious ; and hoping that the waters would swell no higher, they persuaded themselves that they should, within a few days, finish their business. They very well knew the townsmen’s necessities ; and that all their victuals being already spent, the affairs within were drawing to great extremity. While both sides were in these hopes and fears, the time came wherein nature, by way of her hidden causes, was likewise to work her effects. About the end of September the sea began to swell exceedingly, according as she useth to do in that season of the year ; and pouring in at the high tides, no longer waves, but even mountains of waters, into the most inward channels and rivers, made so great an inundation, as all the country about Leyden seemed to be turned into a sea.* It cannot be said how much the rebels were hereby encouraged, and the king’s men discouraged. The former came presently forth with their fleet, which consisted of about one hundred and fifty bottoms, a great part whereof were made like galleys ; and to these were added many other boats which served only to carry victuals. The whole fleet was thus assembled together about the beginning of October, and put to water in good order, to execute their designed relief : the galleys went on the outsides ; the other greater vessels, which, if need should be, were to play upon the forts in the midst ; and those which bore the victuals in

* Strada says, with an expression of incredulity however, that by means of this inundation vessels came over-land to Leyden from a distance of forty miles.

the rear. But there was no occasion of any great contention: for the king's men, having valiantly defended themselves in sundry places, considering that they were not now to fight with men, but with the elements, thought rather how to withdraw themselves into places of safety, than rashly to oppose the enemy. Yet they could not forego their fortifications, neither so soon nor in so good order, but that many of them remained a prey either to the sword or to the water. And truly it was a miserable spectacle to behold from all parts, one slain, another drowned; and many endeavour to save themselves in the highest places, where, when they were freed from the waters, they were inexorably slain by the enemy.* 'Tis said that above fifteen hundred of the king's men perisht thus, and most of them Spaniards; as those who were chiefly employed in ordering the siege, and who desirous to bear away the greatest glory, fell into the greatest misfortune. Thus was Leyden at last relieved, after five months' siege, to the exceeding great joy of the rebels and all that favoured them. But howsoever, the memory of this siege remained a long time very sorrowful in the city; for about ten thousand died within the town of hunger and other sufferings; and all the most unclean and vilest nourishment was already so consumed when the relief was brought in, and the besieged resolving rather to die than to yield; nothing was expected but that the city should give up her last breath, and remaining a miserable carcass, should be buried within her own walls and houses."†

* The Dutch annoyed the Spaniards much with sharp hooks fastened to poles or ropes, by which they drew up the Spaniards into their shipping. One Peter Borgia was caught up with four hooks into a vessel holding six or seven men, and supposed to be mortally hurt: but presently, while they were deeply engaged in fishing for more men, he caught up a battle-axe, and set on them from behind with such fury, that he killed three, and frightened the rest overboard, and thus carried off to the Spanish camp a vessel laden with provisions.—*Strada, Bell. Belg.* lib. viii.

† Bentivoglio, *Hist. of Wars in Flanders*, Englished by Henry Earl of Monmouth, 1698.

In this siege the Spanish general committed a fatal error in not trying an assault, which might probably have succeeded, since there were no regular troops within the town; a body of English auxiliaries who were placed in advance near Gouda, and intended by the Prince of Orange to form the garrison of Leyden, when dislodged, having behaved so ill in the first skirmish, that the citizens refused them entrance within the walls. And this step, which might have been their ruin, became the cause of their safety, for the additional number of consumers must have brought their provisions to an earlier end, besides that no troops, comparatively uninterested in the event, would have endured the extremity of distress to which the men of Leyden were reduced. Of the amount of their suffering, which the Italian historian just quoted barely notices, the reader will be enabled to form a fuller idea by a few particulars derived from other authorities.

“With extreme impatience they now expected the approach of those tides which are commonly the object of their dread and terror. The situation of the besieged was become the most desperate and deplorable. During seven weeks there had not been a morsel of bread within the city; and the only food had been the roots of herbs and weeds, and the flesh of dogs and horses. Even all these were at length consumed, and the people reduced to live on soup made of the hides of animals which had been killed. A pestilence succeeded to the famine, and carried off in a few weeks some thousands of the inhabitants. Those who survived, overwhelmed with anguish at the dismal scenes which they daily beheld, were scarcely able to perform the mournful office of burying the dead. In this dreadful situation they saw from their walls the flags and sails of the vessels destined for their relief, but had the mortification to perceive that it was utterly impossible for them to approach. It is not surprising that some of the people, finding their misery greater than they were able to endure, should have entertained the thoughts of surrendering the town to the enemy. Some conspiracies were again formed

for this purpose, but they were discovered and defeated by the vigilance of Douza, supported by a great majority of the people, to whom neither the pestilence, nor famine, nor death in its most hideous forms, appeared so dreadful as the tyranny of the Spaniards.

"A great number of people having come one day in a tumultuous manner to a magistrate whose name was Adrian, exclaiming that he ought either to give them food, or deliver the town into the hands of the enemy: 'I have solemnly sworn,' he replied, 'that I will never surrender myself or my fellow-citizens to the cruel and perfidious Spaniard; and I will sooner die than violate my oath. I have no food, else I would give it you. But if my death can be of use to you, take, tear me in pieces, and devour me; I shall die with satisfaction, if I know that by my death I shall for one moment relieve you from your direful necessity.' By this extraordinary answer, the people, struck with astonishment, were silenced, and their fury was for some time appeased."*

In default of a better parallel to the battle of Salamis, we conclude this chapter with the overthrow of the Spanish Armada. The points of resemblance, such as they are, are sufficiently obvious and general, and consist in the magnitude of the interests at stake, in the alacrity shown by the English as well as by the Athenian people, and in the signal defeat of the greater by the less force. We may also direct attention to the circumstance, that in each case the defeated fleet was superior to its antagonist in the bulk no less than the number of its ships, and in each case owed its destruction mainly to that very superiority; the lighter and more manageable vessels proving an over-match for their formidable-looking opponents. The incident, however, is sufficiently striking to deserve notice, even if the resemblance were weaker, and if national vanity called less strongly for its insertion; independently of which we have some pleasure in giving the following high-sounding specimen of a contemporary historian, who has summoned all his

* Watson's Hist. of Philip II.

powers to match the dignity of his subject by the elevation of his style.

“Although this present yeere 1587 were but as the vigil of the next ensuing yeere 1588, concerning which yeere many ancient and strange prophecies in divers languages, and many excellent astronomers of sundry nations, had in very plain termes foretold, that the yeere 1588 should be most fatall and ominous unto all estates, concluding in these words, or to the like effect, viz. ‘And if in that yeere the world doe not perish and utterly decay, yet empires all, and kingdomes after shall, and no man to raise himself shall know no way, and that for ever after it shall be called the yeere of wonder,’ &c., yet for divers yeeres past, by reason of the aforesaid generall predictions, all Europe stood at gaze, vehemently expecting more strange and terrible alterations, both in imperiall and regall estates, than ever happened since the world began. Which sayd universall terror was this present yeere half abated, and plainly discovered that England was the maine subject of that time’s operation: for albeit, the Spanish provision for three yeeres past were discerned to be wonderous great, for speciall service by sea and land, yet used they all possible secrecy concerning their intent, until they were fully furnished.

“The queene and counsell, for two yeeres space, caused the ministers to manifest unto their congregations the furious purpose of the Spanish king, dukes of Parma and Guyse, with the dangerous dissimulation of the French king, by whose paines and industry the whole communality became of one heart and mind, and began to retaine a stronger opinion touching the Spaniards settled resolution for the invasion of England, than either queene or counsell. The English nation were so combined in heart, that I here confesse I want art lively to expresse the sympathy of love between the subjects and the sovereigne.

“This yeere 1587, being fully spent, and each man’s mind, more forward than the spring, of infinite desire to grapple with the enemye, after many musters both of

horse and foote, and due survey of England's chiefest strength, to wit, navigation, captaines, commanders, leaders, and fit officers were appointed unto their severall charges, over all which land forces, Robert Earle of Leicester was lord generall, and Henry Lord Hounsdon was generall for the queenes person.

"Cities, counties, townes and villages, the cinque-ports, and all other havens of England, manifested as great forwardnesse in their zealous love and dutie, as either subjects could perform or prince expect. To single out the admirable dexterity and bounty of any one particular place, or people, were apparent wrong to all, yet for a taste of trueth in all, thus much may bee sayd for London. After the councell had demaunded what the citty would doe in their prince and countryes right, the lord maior and aldermen humbly besought their honours to set downe what their wisdomes thought requisite in such a case: the lords demanded five thousand men, and fifteene ships; the city craved two days respite for answeare, which was granted, and then entreated their lordships, in signe of their perfect love and loyaltie to their prince and country, kindly to accept tenne thousand men and thirty shippes, amply furnished. And even as London London-like gave president, the whole kingdome kept true ranke and equipage.

"The whole nobility, most nobly like themselves, and like planets of the higher orbes, in kind conjunction knit their hearts in one, whose princely valour equalling their love, assured their soveraigne of triumphant victory."

The English fleet was divided into two squadrons, one under Lord Henry Seymour of sixteen ships, appointed to watch the narrow seas, and prevent communication between the Armada and the Duke of Parma, then commanding in Flanders; the other stationed on the western coast, to meet their formidable enemy upon his first approach to the British shore, composed of vessels of all sizes and descriptions, in number from eighty-five to one hundred. Lord Charles Howard, High Admiral of England, commanded in chief; Drake, a

name of fear to the Spaniard, was vice-admiral, and among many lords and gentlemen who held subordinate commands, the well-known seamen Hawkins and Fro-bisher filled worthy place and trust. The train bands or militia of the maritime counties, being summoned to be ready for service on their own coast, at the earliest warning, two strong armies were collected from the interior, one of 2000 horse and 34,000 foot for the defence of the queen's person, and as a disposable force; the other was encamped at Tilbury; and the opposite town of Gravesend being fortified, it was proposed to connect the two banks and shut up the river by a bridge of boats.

"It was a pleasant sight to behold the soldiers as they marched towards Tilbury, their cheerful countenances, courageous words and gestures, dauncing and leaping wheresoever they came, and in the campe, their most felicity was hope of fight with the enemy, where oft times divers rumours ran of their foes' approach, and that present battell would bee given them; then were they as joyfull at such newes, as if lusty giants were to run a race: in this campe were many old soldiers and right brave commanders, who, although in their greatest force did never exceede the number of 3000 horse and 15,000 foot, yet there were ready in all places many thousands more to backe and second them, and it was found good policy not on the sudden to keepe too great an army in one place.

"Thus England being in all points furnished, and in good readiness for their own defence, I will speake a word or two concerning the Hollanders, then leave them awhile, and report of their adversaries' estate and preparation.

"The Hollanders came in roundly with threescore sayle, brave shippes of war, fierce and full of spleene, not so much for England's ayd, as in just occasion of their own defence, knowing the originall and ground of this hostility to proceed from themselves, with thirty years' continued sharpe warre. These men foreseeing the greatnesse of the danger that might ensue if the Spaniards should chance to winne the day, and get the mastery over them, in due regard whereof their manly courage was inferior to none.

"The King of Spaine, after three yeeres deliberate advice, was three yeeres preparing this twofold army in Spain, whereof he made Alphonso Perez, duke of Medina Sidonia, chiefe generall, and Don Martino Recaldo, of Cantabria, [vice-admirall: which army, by the ayde of the clergy, the princes of Italy, as well friends as feodaries, the seven kingdomes in Spain, the entire state of Portugall, together with the help of mariners, pylots, munition, tackling and victuall from the north-west parts of Europe, was now fully furnished, about the middle of May, riding at anchor in the river Tagus, neare Lisbon, consisting of 128 vessels for warre, viz. carricks, galleons, argoseys, and four galiasses, 2555 pieces of great ordinance, 12,000 mariners, and 20,000 land soldiers, besides voluntaries, vitlers, hospitals, and shippes of artificers to attend them. When the king beheld this mighty host, observing well their matchless strength, and plenteous provision for sea and land, as well for others as themselves, to wit, oyle, wine, rice, salt, biskit, horses, mules, carts, carriages, powder, shot, saddles, apparell, pickaxes, and shovels, hee sayd, it might well be called the Invincible army. It was ever meant this army should have been at the Groyne * before this time, to have taken the full advantage of the yeere, for so the Dukes of Guise and Parma did expect, whose preparations, on all points, were in a better readinesse at the beginning of June, according to the king's appointment, than they were afterward; for seeing the sommer half spent, they doubted whether the king would send his army this yeere, or no, but the king could not help it, for that his ships were furnished in divers ports, and through contrary winds could not be united until this present, so as they were constrained to anchor at Lisbon, where they should have hoysed sail at the Groyne, to wit, about the beginning of June."

The terms of naval architecture just used require some explanation. Carracks, argosies, and galleons, were names for the largest species of sailing vessels in use. Some idea of their size may be formed from the dimensions of a Portuguese vessel captured in 1592. Her

* Corunna.

burthen was 1600 tons, she carried 32 pieces of brass ordnance, and between 600 and 700 passengers, and was built with decks seven stories high. She is said to have been in length from the figure-head to the stern 165 feet; in breadth near 47. Carrack was a name given by the Portuguese to the vessels built for the Brazil and East-Indian trade: their capacity was chiefly in their depth. Galleasses were the largest vessels impelled by oars, and differed from galleys only in their superior size, and in the arrangement of the artillery.

A minute detail of the number and force of the Spanish fleet is given in Charnock's History of Marine Architecture. It appears that the vessels classed as galleons mounted from 50 to 20, or even so few as 15 cannon, and the largest of them were from 1000 to 1600 tons burthen. The following summary will convey some notion of the size and equipment of the vessels in use, and show the immense superiority of the Spanish over the English force.

Tonnage.	No. of Galleons.	Smaller Vessels.	Guns.	Sailors.	Soldiers.	
7,739 Portuguese } squadron }	10	2	389	1,242	3,086	
5,861 Biscayan . .	10	4	302	906	2,117	
8,054 Castilian . .	15	2	474	1,798	2,924	
8,692 Andalusian .	10	1	315	776	2,365	
7,192 Guypuscoan	11	4	296	608	2,120	
8,632 Italian . . .	10	0	319	844	2,792	
10,860 Medina . .	0	24	466	930	3,570	
2,090 Mendoza * .	0	25	204	746	1,481	
<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	
59,120	66	62	2,765	7,845	20,455	
						Slaves.
Four Neapolitan Galleasses, } mounting . . 50 guns each }			200	477	744	1,200
Four Portuguese 50 " "			200	424	440	888
						<hr/>
						400
						901
						1,184
						2,088
						<hr/>
						2,765
						7,845
						20,455
						<hr/>
						3,165
						8,746
						21,689

* This is the classification of the provinces as given by Charnock.

The English force is less minutely given: numerically it was superior to the Spanish, for it consisted of 175 vessels, besides others classed as victuallers: but the inferiority of the several ships in size and force will appear from a comparison of their tonnage and the number of their crews. The largest of the royal navy was of 1100 tons: the collective burthen of the fleet amounted only to 29,744 tons, barely more than half that of the Spanish navy, and their crews consisted of 14,501 men, opposed to a numerical force more than double their number. The number of guns and weight of metal of the English fleet, we have not been able to obtain—in this respect the disproportion was probably even greater. The reader will observe that we have not taken into account the Dutch squadron, which did good service in blocking up in their harbours the forces collected by the Duke of Parma, but never were opposed to the Spanish fleet.

The Armada in its passage from Lisbon to the Groyne was considerably injured by stress of weather, which still further delayed it, and June and July being almost spent, and no appearance of the enemy, it began to be thought that for that year at least the Spaniards would not come. Many of the volunteers, therefore, being indifferently provided for keeping the sea, dispersed themselves into different harbours, and the queen, economical even to parsimony, countenanced this imprudence by recalling from the high admiral four of her great ships. Meanwhile the Duke of Parma had assembled in Flanders 30,000 foot and 5000 horse, and collected in his ports 340 flat-bottomed vessels, great and small, to land his men readily upon an open strand, with store of all necessities to make good his descent, even in the face of an enemy. The plan of the campaign was this: the Duke of Medina was ordered to steer direct to Flanders, place himself under the command of the Duke of Parma, who under convoy of the Armada should disembark in Kent or Essex, as near to London or to the camp as he could. It was also meant that the Duke of Guise should first have landed in the west, under protection of the Spanish navy as it passed along, to effect a diversion in favour of

the real attack ; while, after the arrival of the Duke of Parma, the fleet, passing northward, was appointed to land in Yorkshire 12,000 men.

“ The Spanish navy having refreshed themselves at Groyne, after twenty-eight days’ rest, set forward for England, about the 11th of July, in the greatest pompe that eye ever beheld, matchlesse in state, commaunding their passage whersoever they came, exceeding far the force of those two thousand warlike sayle of great Syme-ramis,* or the like number at commaund of the Egyptian Cleopatra. or those 1200 well prepared ships raised by Charles of Fraunce, with like full purpose of invasion, for revenge upon King Richard the Second, for damage done by his graundsire Edward the Third, in his French conquest ; but this proud navy hath more skilfull guides, and in the overweening of her strength sets forward boldly to perform her charge (though in stealing wise), as if necessity hadde constrained them to take advantage of home-bred traytors, or ambitious rebels, risen against their state, and not like souldiers, sent in cause of just hostilitie, to encounter with an honourable enemy, without due summons, or defiance unto armes, according to the law of nations.

“ The 19th of July the English admirall, upon direct knowledge of the enemies approach, sends speedy summons unto all the English fleet, who still retained their former courage. The Spaniards by this time were entered the mouth of the narrow seas, whose number, state and strength being well observed by the lord admirall, and rightly considered, that it was now no time to dally or flatter in so imminent daunger, in depth of humane judgment, and discharge of duty to his prince and country, instantly addressed his letters by his brother

* This fleet of Semiramis is probably about as real as Shakspeare’s sea-coast of Bohemia. What the amount of Cleopatra’s fleet might be we do not know ; but at Actium she had only 60 ships. In the last example Stow is within bounds. Froissart says that 1287 ships were prepared on this occasion. What sort of cock-boats they were is another question.

in law, Sir Edward Hobby, unto her majesty, signifying the great difference in power betwixt the English and the Spaniard, and therefore seeing the English navall forces far inferior to the Spanish army, advised the queene to send more ayde to the sea, and to make ready the chiefe strength of her land forces: at which newes the queene forthwith commands more ships to the sea, whereupon yet in voluntary manner, the earles of Oxford, Northumberland and Cumberland, Sir Thomas Cecill, Sir Robert Cecill, Sir Walter Rawleigh, master Thomas Gerrard, master Arthur Gorge, Sir Thomas Vavasor, and many other honourable personages, were suddenly embarked, committing themselves unto the present chaunce of warre.

“Gentlemen and yeomen of sundry shires, bordering on the sea, knowing many of the English shippes to bee very weakly furnished with victuall and munition, out of their singular zeale and loyalty sent cheerefully such provision as they either could make, or was provided for their families; yea, such was the integrity of the English, as the recusants offered their service, and were desirous to take their fortune with the common souldiers.

“The 21st. July the Spaniards came as high as Plimmouth, where divers English shippes lay fast in harbor, the rest gave charge upon the enemy; the Armado then daraines * itselfe into the fashion of the crescent moone; each side prepares themselves speedily to fight with braves and bravadoes, their shrill sounding trumpets and their ratling drums lent mutuall courage unto both batalions, and loud thundring canons send swift messengers of death: both armies strive to get advantage of the wind, but the English, beeing much more quick and yare, winne their desire, and England’s admirall in person gave the onset, and for two houres space maintained a valiant fight untill night drew on, and wanting forty of the English flecta, which as yet could not by any meanes come unto their ayde, they tackt about.

* Draws up for battle.

"The next day the English navy beeing well encreased, gave charge and chase upon the enemye squadron after squadron, seconding each other like swift horsemen, that could nimbly come and goe, and fetch the wind for most advantage. Now begins the furious fight on either part, and manly souldiers firmly keepe their stand upon the starboord and larboord side, and as occasion serves, some cry keepe aloofe, others roome ho; if the seas were calme, it serves the English well to charge upon the greatest bulwarke of the Spanish fleete; and then their galliasses, as sergeants of the band, would issue forth sometimes to succour their distressed friends, and otherwhiles with purpose to surprise such English as they saw becalmed, whose kindnesse oft the English with their broadsides would requite, sending their dole untill the Spaniards blood ranne out at scupper hole; but if the wind grew bigge and billowes played aloft, then the Spaniards with their lofty towers make full account to stem the English comming in their way: sometimes the English in their eager fight fell foule upon the daunger of their ennemies, and so continued from the evening unto the breake of day: the lord high admirall himselfe was one whole night within the maine battell of the Spanish army: both navies showed great valour in their dayly fight, which commonly continued within the reach of musket shot, and many times at push of pike without intermission, save only when for want of wind they were restrained: the English chiefetaines ever sought to single out the great commanders of the Spanish hoste whose loftie castles held great scorne of their encounter: but whilest both armies were thus conjoyned, Don Pedro de Valdez, a chiefe commander of the army, fell fowle upon one of his fellowes, and brake his foremast, who being maimed and left behind, lay like a stiffe elephant in the open field, beset with eager hounds, who being commaunded to yeelde, sayd, he would yeelde to none but his equal, and asked in whose squadron hee was fallen, they answered into Drake's squadron, then he sayd, fetch him for I will yeeld to none but to a commander like myself. Drake being returned from chasing

certain Easterlings, Don Pedro beganne to articulate, but Drake peremptorily told him, it was now no time to stand upon tearmes of composition, whereupon he yeelded; having caused all their jewels, plate, money, apparell, with whatever else their present state could any way afford, to bee layed open, to prevent the fury of the English when they came aboard.

"After that, another galleon by negligence was set on fire, and therewith consumed to the lower decke, under which lay store of gunpowder, never touched. The lord Thomas Howard, pittying their extream misery, but not being able to stay on boord through extreamity of stench, caused the remainder of those scorched men to be set on shore.

"The Spanish navie for sixe dayes space having endured many sharpe fights and fierce assaults coasting and discoasting from England to the coast of Fraunce, and from thence to England, and then to Fraunce again, the seaven and twentieth of July, towards night, they cast anchor nigh to Callis Roade, the English likewise rid at anchor very neere unto them.

"Now rides the Armada at her wished post, unto whom the Duke of Parma sends present word, that within three days their forces should conjoyne, and with first advantage of wind and tyde, transport their armies to the English coast, in meane space they would personally meet, and then determine betweene themselves what was further to be done.

"The Flemings, Walloons, and the French came thicke and threefolde to behold the fleete, admiring the exceeding greatnesse of their shippes, and warlike order; the greatest kept the outside next the enemye, like strong castles, fearing no assault, the lesser placed in the middleward; fresh victuals straight were brought aboard, captaines and cavaliers for their money might have what they would, who gave the French so liberally as within twelve houres an egge was worth sixe pence, besides thanks.

"Whilest this lusty navie, like a demi-conqueror, ryd thus at anchor, the Spanish faction in sundry nations

had divulged that England was subdued, the queene taken and sent prisoner over the Alpes to Rome, where barefoote shee should make her humble reconciliation, &c.

“In Paris, Don Barnadino de Mendoza, ambassador from Spaine, entred into our lady church (Nôtre Dame) advancing his rapier in his right hand, and with a loud voyce cryed, Victorie, Victorie, and it was forthwith bruited that England was vanquished. But the next day when trueth was known of the Armadoes overthrow, certain pages of adverse faction unto Spain, in bitter scoffing manner, humbly prayed his lordship's letters unto the Duke of Parma, in favour of their good fortune, to bestow on them some odde wast cast townes or villages, as London, Canterbury, or York, or so, whereat Mendoza, being much dismayed, obscured himself, not daring to show his face.

“France, Italy, and Germany, were very doubtfull of the English state, and in those places the English merchants well perceived their double eye, one while smyling on Spaines behalf, and then upon the English casting a fleering looke.

“The queenes navy having well observed the martiall order and invincible strength of the Spaniards, and that it was not possible to remove them by force of fight, and therewithall considered the present purpose of the duke of Parma, and their owne imminent daunger, omitted no time, but according to the present necessity, the generall with his counsell of warre, concluded to make their first stratagem by fire, and thereupon, the 28th July, they emptied eight of their basest barkes, and put therein much combustible matter, which in the evening were subtilly set on fire, and with advantage both of wind and tyde, guided within the reach of canon shotte, before the Spaniards could discern the same; and then the flame grew fierce with sudden terror to the enemye, who thought these floates to have been like the sundry workes of wildfire lately made to break the bridge at Antwerpe, in which feare they all amazed with shrikes and loud outcries, to the great astonishment of the neere inhabi-

tants, crying, The fire of Antwerpe, the fire of Antwerpe; some cut cables, others let the hawsers slippe, and happiest they who could first bee gone, though few could telle what course to take.

“The first whereof that ran aground, was a galliasse, hard by Callis walls, where the English freely tooke the common spoyle, until they began to take the ordinance and to fire the shippe, whereat the governor being sore displeased, knowing the royalty thereof to be appropriate to himselfe, discharged his canons from the citadel, and drove the English from their benefite. The next was a galleon, which ranne ashore in Flanders. Divers others fell into the hands of the Hollanders. The rest endeavoured by all meanes possible to cast anchor before Gravelyn or Dunkerke, hoping still to have supply from Parma.

“But the English forces being now wholly united, prevented their enemies conjoyning together, and followed their fortunes to the uttermost, continuing four dayes fight in more deadly manner than at any time before, and having incessant cause of fresh encouragement chased the Spaniards from place to place, until they hadde driven them into a desperate estate; so as of necessity, as well for that the wind was westerly, as that their enemies increased, and their own provision of sayles, anchors and cables greatly wasted, resolved to shape their course by the Orcades and the north of Ireland. In whose pursuit, if the English had been but meanly furnished with victual and munition, they would have brought them all unto their mercy, but when they saw them past the Orcades and the Scottish seas, they made retreat. And if the Spaniards had but two days longer continued fight, the English must have made a retreat for want of shotte and powder, and left the Spaniards to their most advantage.

“About the end of September the duke of Medina arrived in Spaine, being as much discountenanced at court, as discouraged in his journey; and of all his royall navy which he caryed forth, there returned only threescore sayle, sore distressed, the rest whereof, some were taken

and spoyled by the English in the narrow seas, and some taken by the Hollanders, and some made a fayre escape by landing in Scotland; but the most perished upon the Irish coast, and slaine by Gallowglasses, whose generall losse was much lamented through Spaine, for that every noted family had lost a kinsman or a neere ally.

“Shippes under the command of the lord high admirall of England, this yeare, 1588 :

Of shippes Royal	17
Attended by other warlike ships	12
And of lusty pinnaces	6
From London there were sent of brave, warlike ships	16
And of pinnaces	4
From Bristow there were sent of serviceable ships	3
And one pinnace	1
From Barstaple there were sent in this expedition, of ships	3
From Excester there were sent of ships	2
And one pinnace	1
From Plimmouth there were sent of ships well appointed	7
And one flye boat	1

“There was sent a pinnace of the lord admirall's—also a pinnace of the lord Sheffield's, and a pinnace of Sir William Winter's.

“The merchant adventurers of England set foorth at their own proper charges, of lusty ships—10.

“Ships under the lord Henry Seymour in the narrow seas :—Of ships royall, accompanied with other very warlike ships well appointed, being in number—16.

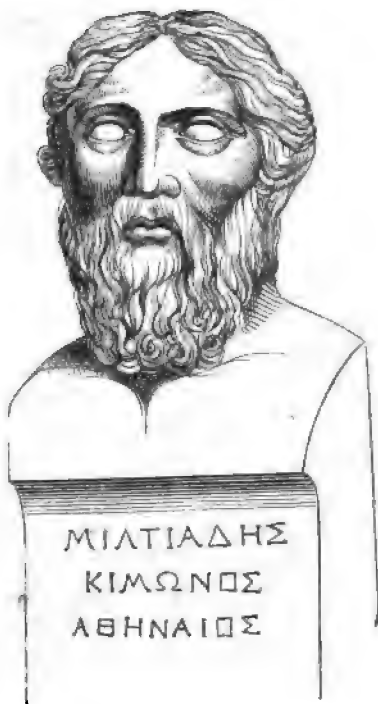
“Besides all these, there were many other barkes, ships, and pinnaces, sent out of the north parts and west parts, as also particularly by divers persons, as by the lord admirall, by divers other lordes, knights, and gentlemen, and some others his followers, and by sundry other noble and vallerous gentlemen and gallant marchants, whereof I could never attaine the certaine knowledge, though I greatly sought it.”

The partisans of the two contending nations differ widely, as is to be expected, in their estimates of the loss

sustained. The victors said that eighty vessels and 18,000 men had perished: Strada rates it at thirty-two captured and wrecked, and 10,000 men: but he acknowledges that the result of the expedition filled all Spain with mourning.



CHAPTER X.



Sequel of the Life of Miltiades—of Aristides—of
Themistocles.

W_E shall hereafter have occasion to describe briefly the total change of the international relations and politics of the Greek communities, which ensued in consequence of

the Persian war. Athens was rewarded for her exertions and sufferings by half a century of increasing and almost uninterrupted splendour, under the successive guidance of Themistocles, Cimon, and Pericles. Still, as we do not write the history of Greece, we shall pass in silence over this brilliant period. Seasons of convulsion present the phenomena on which men dwell, and the eras by which they date, in the moral as well as in the physical world, where the silent process by which Nature elaborates her productions, the slow mouldering of mountains into new plains of inexhaustible fertility pass almost unobserved and unappreciated: but the attention is roused and compelled when the destructive powers of the hurricane and earthquake are let loose. But before we pass entirely from this subject, it will be well briefly to relate the further fortunes of those men to whom Athens owed, not only her greatness, but her existence.

The battle of Marathon raised Miltiades to the height of popularity. He availed himself of it to request an armament of ninety ships, with troops and money, not stating the object of his expedition to his countrymen, but merely promising to enrich them, if they would follow him, for that he would lead them to a land whence they should bring home gold without end. The Athenians, elated by this hope, consented; and he immediately sailed to the island of Paros, and laid siege to its capital, under pretence of exacting satisfaction because a Parian trireme had served in the Persian fleet. This, Herodotus says, was the pretence; but the real reason was a grudge against the Parians, because one of them, Lysagoras, had done him a bad turn with Hydarnes, the Persian governor of the Ionian coast. He therefore sent a herald to demand 100 talents (about 25,000*l.*), saying, that unless they complied, he would never lead away his troops till he had taken the city. But as to giving Miltiades the money, the Parians had no notion at all of that—they only thought how they might best protect themselves; and they laboured by night to double the height of the walls, wherever they seemed open to attack.

"So far," says Herodotus, "all the Greeks agree." The Parians had a little prodigy of their own to account for the failure of the enterprise. When Miltiades made little progress, and was in perplexity, a Parian woman, priestess of the infernal deities, came to him and bade him follow her advice, if it were of importance to him to possess the city. In obedience to her advice, he went to an eminence in front of the city, on which there was a temple dedicated to Ceres, and being unable to open the gates of the sacred enclosure, he leaped over it, and advanced towards the fence, with what specific purpose the historian relates not. On approaching the door he was seized with terror and shuddering, and hastily retreated as he had entered; but in leaping over the fence, he inflicted a severe injury upon his leg. Another story is told by Cornelius Nepos, that a forest upon the continent, which could be seen from the island, by some chance was set on fire during the night, and that the besiegers and the besieged alike concluded it a signal of coming help from the Persian monarch.* But all agree that Miltiades lay sick, and that the siege proceeded unfavourably, and that at last, Herodotus says on the 26th

* Robert Bruce was deceived by a similar accident. Having taken possession of Arran during his long struggle against the power of England, he meditated a descent upon the opposite country of Carrick, in Ayrshire, his own inheritance. Being ignorant of the strength and situation of the English, he despatched a trusty emissary, with orders to kindle a beacon fire, if he found that a descent was practicable. A brilliant light was seen on the appointed eve, but on Bruce's landing, his emissary met him in much alarm, with news that the English were quartered in great strength at Turnberry Castle, his maternal inheritance; and that he knew not how, or by whom, the beacon fire had been lighted. Bruce however persevered in his enterprise and took the castle. It was long believed, and perhaps is so still, that the signal was supernatural, and that it regularly appeared on the anniversary of the Bruce's landing on his native shore. The spot on which it was seen has been called the Bogle's Brae, beyond the memory of man.

day, he broke it up, and led home the fleet. The Athenians were very angry, and shortly after his return, Xanthippus, one of the Alcmaeonid party, brought a capital charge against him, "on account of the deceit practised on the people." Miltiades was too ill to defend himself, for his wound had mortified; but he appeared before the assembly in a litter, while his friends spoke in his behalf, expatiating on the services which he had rendered to the state, especially at Marathon. This being their chief dependence, we may presume that they felt they had a weak cause to support. The people remitted the capital punishment, but imposed a fine of fifty talents,* (12,500*l.*) Miltiades died soon after, and the fine was discharged by his celebrated son Cimon.

Such is the story as it is told by Herodotus. It is not theatrical enough for later writers, who have related how the victor of Marathon, being unable to discharge the fine imposed upon him, was cast into prison, and died there; and how his body was refused the rites of burial, until Cimon redeemed it by the sacrifice of his own liberty. The reader will do well to hesitate in receiving such ornamental passages in Grecian history, when uncorroborated by the earliest authorities. The silence of Herodotus alone would be sufficient to discredit this story. It has, however, been acutely inferred from a passage in Plato, that Miltiades was sentenced to imprisonment, probably till the fine was paid (a very necessary provision), but that this part of the sentence was not carried into effect.†

The death of Miltiades has been a favourite topic for declamation against popular ingratitude. If the Athenians were really deceived; if they supposed, as the promise of unbounded wealth might lead them to think,

* We may repeat what has been before said, that these computations are merely approximations to expressing the value of the ancient money in modern denominations, without reference to the intrinsic value of the precious metals in Greece.

† Mitford, chap. vii. 5

that he intended to lead them against the Persians, and their anger was directed against the misapplication of the national resources to gratify private animosity, and plunder a kindred state; then was their conduct just and honourable. No claim to public gratitude ought to be allowed to screen a public delinquent from detection; when guilt is proved, past services may fitly be alleged in mitigation or remission of punishment. But we cannot implicitly believe in this virtuous indignation; and are inclined to suspect that if Miltiades had returned with one hundred talents, he would have heard nothing of prosecution, and that the failure, not the attack upon Paros, was the true grievance. During a siege of twenty-six days there was abundant time to recall the fleet, if the enterprise had been disapproved. Nepos indeed says that he was charged with having received a bribe from Persia to withdraw; and ascribes the readiness of the Athenians to convict, to a growing dread of his talents and popularity, and fear lest he should prove a second Pisistratus. This is not improbable; it is in perfect keeping with the institution of ostracism, which seems to have been first levelled against Aristides five or six years later.

The rival statesmen, Aristides and Themistocles, men diametrically opposite as well in character as in politics, were rising to the first honours before the battle of Marathon. Aristides was one of the ten generals appointed on that occasion, and the year after held the dignity of Archon. Simple, just, and disinterested, neither for his own nor his country's advantage would he deviate from the plain rules of honesty; and he thus earned and merited the appellation of the Just. Themistocles on the contrary was avowedly actuated by party spirit; and his desire to raise his country seems to have been secondary to his desire to raise himself. Crooked as acute in his policy, he scrupled not as to the character of his means, if they were fitted to promote his end; and his strenuous exertions in the Persian war were so skilfully contrived, as to secure for himself a kind reception from the victor, if his first object, the deliverance

of Athens, failed. Two such men, of whom the former supported the aristocratical, the latter the democratical party, were not likely to remain at peace; and two or three years before the invasion of Xerxes, Themistocles had influence enough to procure a vote of ostracism against his rival. This was a species of banishment for five, ten, or twenty years, called ostracism from ostrakon, a shell, or piece of earthenware, because citizens wrote the name of him whom they wished to exile upon some such material, and cast it into a balloting box. To obtain a decree of this nature six thousand votes were required. Ostensibly it was neither a punishment nor disgrace, but merely intended as a safeguard lest even the virtues and services of great men should become dangerous to the liberty of their country. Themistocles, however, had a mind capable of laying aside private enmity when an emergency required it, and himself proposed a decree before the battle of Salamis, by which Aristides, with all other exiles, was recalled. Eminent alike, each upon his own element, as the one at Salamis, so the other commanded the Athenians at Plataea. On this occasion, the post of honour, the right wing, being held according to their constant custom by the Lacedæmonians, a dispute arose between the Athenians and Tegeatæ which should be placed in the left. Here Aristides displayed his prudence and moderation.* "We came here," he said, "to fight, and not to talk. Since however the Tegeatæ have advanced their deeds of renown, both in old times and of late, it is necessary that we also should explain to you our claims to priority among Greeks." Then briefly enumerating their ancient glories, and concluding with mention of Marathon, he added, "But this is no time to wrangle about place. We are ready to obey you, Lacedæmonians, wherever and against whomsoever you choose to station us; and wherever we are, will do our best. Command us, therefore, as men who will obey." The whole army of the

* Herod. ix. 27.—He says "the Athenians answered." Plutarch ascribes all the merit of it to Aristides, which is suitable both to his character and the rank he held.

Lacedæmonians shouted out, that the Athenians were more worthy than the Tegeatæ to lead the left wing.

We must refer to the history of Greece for the formation of a confederacy to prosecute the war against Persia, and for the events which disgusted the members of it with Sparta, and induced them to place Athens at their head. Aristides at this time commanded her fleet; and his known probity and moderation probably had much influence in procuring this distinction, the first step to her future empire. To him was referred the delicate task of apportioning the sums which each state should contribute to the general fund: and so justly did he execute this trust that all parties were satisfied; and in later times the tributaries to the Athenian treasury referred to the assessment of Aristides as a sort of golden age. He died, it is said, in the year 467 B.C., poor, but honoured, insomuch that he was buried at the public charge, and his children were provided for at the public expense. This is the best testimony to the honesty of a man through whose hands four hundred and sixty talents passed yearly.

The career of Themistocles was of a far more varied and eventful nature. His first recorded appearance in public life was signalled by a measure pregnant with important results; and doubly meritorious, as proving that at an early age he clearly distinguished the true policy of Athens, and because it did not seem likely to advance the fortunes of an aspiring man who sought to build his greatness upon popular favour. The revenues accruing from the silver mines of Laureium, instead of being applied to any public purpose, were distributed among the citizens, and furnished a gratuity of ten drachmæ (about eight shillings) to each man. Themistocles saw the importance of being strong at sea, and had influence or eloquence enough to obtain a decree to apply this income exclusively to ship-building, until two hundred triremes were completed with the money. This made the Athenians at once a great maritime power, whereas before they had but few ships, and those chiefly of the smaller class. This seems to have

taken place the year before the battle of Marathon. "Now, after this good beginning and success, he won the citizens by degrees to bend their force to sea, declaring to them how by land they were scant able to make head against their equals, whereas by their power at sea they should not only defend themselves from the barbarous people, but moreover be able to command all Greece. Hereupon he made them good mariners, and passing seamen, as Plato saith, where before they were stout and valiant soldiers by land. This gave his enemies occasion to cast it in his teeth afterwards, that he had taken away from the Athenians the pike and target, and had brought them to the galley and the oar, and so he got the upper hand of Miltiades who in that inveighed against him. Now after he had thus his will by bringing the sea service to pass, whether thereby he did overthrow the justice of the commonweal or not, I leave that to the philosophers to dispute. But that the preservation of all Greece stood at that time on the sea, and that the galleys only were the cause of setting up Athens again, Xerxes himself is a sufficient witness, besides other proofs that might be brought thereof."*

His brilliant services were duly acknowledged. At the first Olympic festival celebrated after the defeat of Xerxes, he occupied more attention than the contending champions; and even the Spartans, while they gave the prize of valour to their own admiral Eurybiades, awarded to him that of wisdom, and though generally little gratified by the visits of strangers, invited him to Lacedæmon, and appointed a guard of honour of three hundred citizens to attend him. Continuing in command of the Athenian squadron when the allied fleet began to exact satisfaction from those islanders who, probably against their will, had followed the Persian standard, he abused his high character and station by extorting large sums as the price of his protection from those islands or persons who were obnoxious to the charge of Medism, or having favoured the Persian cause. "Let others extol

* Plut., Themist.

Pausanias, or Xanthippus, or Leotychides; my praise shall be for Aristides, the best man of sacred Athens. For Latona detests Themistocles, the false, the unjust, the traitor; who for paltry pelf deserted the interest of Timocreon, his friend and host, and refused to restore him to his native Ialysus. Money guided the destructive course of the fleet; while the corrupt commander, restoring unjustly, persecuting unjustly, some into banishment, some to death, as the larger bribe persuaded, filled his coffers."* Such were the charges brought against him by Timocreon, a Rhodian, who had been guilty of apostacy from the Grecian cause, and depended on Themistocles' friendship to restore him to his country. In this particular case there seems to have been nothing to blame, and indeed the accusation is, that Themistocles did not pervert his power to gratify private ends: but the concurrent testimony of antiquity leads us to conclude that these charges of unjust and interested dealing rest upon a solid foundation.

We must refer to the History of Greece for an account of the bold and able measures by which he secured time to rebuild the walls of Athens, and for the improvement of the harbour Piræus, which under his superintendence was connected with the city by walls built of squared blocks of marble, and became the most complete naval arsenal yet known. How long he continued to enjoy his high popularity and authority is not known: but he wanted moderation to retain what he had justly acquired. He offended the people by an unworthy vanity, and disgusted the allies by rapacity and ostentation, insomuch that reports were circulated of his holding correspondence with Persia, and aiming at the tyranny of Athens, if not of all Greece. And he had powerful enemies at home to take advantage of these errors, not so much in Aristides, whose honest opposition was untinged by personal or factious animosity, as in the Alcmaeonidæ, and in Cimon, son of Miltiades, who at this time was in the commencement of his long, and brilliant,

* Mitford, chap. xi. 1.

and virtuous career. To them the democratical tenor of his policy and his personal superiority were alike distasteful; and they had influence enough to procure his banishment by ostracism for five years. This took place in the year 471 B.C. During this period, Pausanias, king of Sparta, was convicted of having engaged in a treasonable correspondence with the Persian monarch, and put to death; and the Lacedæmonians asserted that they had proof of Themistocles being concerned in the plot, and required that the same punishment might be inflicted upon him. Plutarch says that he flatly refused to join in the treason of Pausanias, but that he preserved the secret. His accusers required that he should be brought to trial, not in his own country, but before some general council of the Greek states, probably the council of Amphictyons, and they had sufficient influence with the party now in power at Athens to obtain their concurrence. Messengers were sent with authority to apprehend him, wherever they should find him. He fled first to the island of Corcyra, to which he had formerly been a benefactor. But the Corcyræans, alleging that they durst not keep him, conveyed him over to the continent of Epirus, and there being continually pursued, he was driven at last, like Coriolanus, to take shelter with an ancient enemy, Admetus, king of the Molossians. That prince being absent, he awaited his return seated before the domestic altar, holding in his arms his infant son: such being esteemed the most sacred and binding method of supplication among the Molossians. Admetus was touched, and, while he was able, gave the fugitive a secure retreat; but the Athenian and Lacedæmonian commissioners tracked his steps, and though his protector refused to give him up, he was obliged to fly. He now crossed the continent to Pydna, a seaport of Macedonia, and finding there a ship bound for Ionia, he embarked, and was carried by stress of weather among the Athenian fleet then besieging Naxos.* Fearing to be recognised, he called the master aside, told him who he was, and

* This fixes the date of these events to 460. Clinton.

why he fled, and declared that if he were taken, he would charge him with having been bribed to favour his escape. To avoid this, it was only requisite to confine the sailors closely to the ship until the weather served them to be gone. The master consented, and instead of landing at night, as was usual with Grecian mariners, they lay a day and night tempest-tossed at sea; and at length arrived safely at Ephesus. Themistocles now reaped the benefit of his double-dealing. He kept himself concealed, however, at first, because the Persians had set a price of two hundred talents upon his head, until he received an answer to the following letter, which he wrote to Artaxerxes, son of Xerxes, who had newly succeeded to his father's throne: "I, Themistocles, am coming to thee, who of all the Grecians, as long as I was forced to resist thy father that invaded me, have done your house the most damage; yet the benefits I did him were more after once I with safety, he with danger, was to make retreat. And both a good turn is already due to me (writing here how he had forewarned him of the Grecians' departure out of Salamis, and ascribing the not breaking of the bridge falsely to himself), and I now come prepared to do thee great services, being persecuted by the Grecians for thy friendship's sake. But I desire to have a year's respite, that I may declare unto thee the cause of my coming myself."

"The king, as is reported, wondered at his design, and commanded him to do as he said. In this time of respite he learned as much as he could of the language and fashions of the place, and a year after, coming to the court, he was great with the king, more than ever had been any Grecian before; both for his former estimation, and the hope that he gave of bringing Greece into subjection, but especially in the proof that he had given of his wisdom. For Themistocles was a man in whom most truly was manifested the strength of natural judgment, wherein he had something worthy of admiration, different from other men. For by his natural prudence, without the help of instruction either before or after, he was both best able to form an opinion on the

spur of the moment with least deliberation, and the best diviner of the issue of matters to come. Of those things he was engaged in, he could give a good account; and what he was unpractised in, he was not to seek how to judge of conveniently. Also he foresaw, no man better, what was best or worse in any case that was doubtful. And to say all in few words, this man, by the natural goodness of his wit, and quickness of deliberation, was the ablest of all men to tell what was fit to be done on a sudden. But falling sick he ended his life: some say he died voluntarily by poison, because he thought himself unable to perform what he had promised to the king. His monument is in Magnesia in Asia, in the market-place: for he had the government of that country, the king having bestowed upon him Magnesia, which yielded him fifty talents yearly for his bread, and Lampsacus for his wine (for this city was then thought to have store of wine), and Myus for his meat. His bones are said by his kinsman to have been brought home by his own appointment, and buried in Attica, unknown to the Athenians: for it was not lawful to bury one there that had fled for treason. These were the ends of Pausanias the Lacedæmonian and Themistocles the Athenian, the most famous men of all the Grecians of their time.”*

“Such were the ends of the two most famous men of Greece in their time.” That of Pausanias moves little compassion: he was a weak and vicious man, raised to an undeserved celebrity by hereditary rank, and by the mighty events with which the age was pregnant. He was a traitor, and he perished as such, worthy of pity only for the lingering torment of his death. Much more touching is the fate of Themistocles, driven on an unjust accusation, as we believe, from place to place, and at last forced to seek shelter from those to whom he had done the deepest harm, and thus apparently to justify those accusations which alone had reduced him to so unworthy a step. Melancholy we must needs call the close of his life, in spite of all the splendour that surrounded it: for who can believe that to such a man

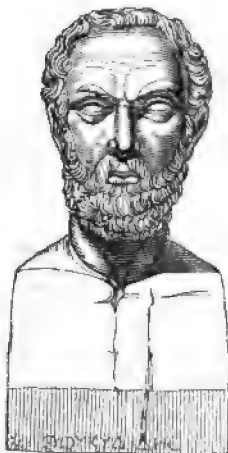
* Thucyd. i. 137, 38.

wealth and luxury could compensate for exile, for the loss of all share and interest in the greatness which he had himself founded, and was now compelled to surrender into the guidance of unfriendly hands? The anecdote relating to his burial furnishes a touching illustration of the nature of his feelings at the close of life, and is itself almost sufficient to refute the charge of treason. Men seek not so fondly to be restored even in death to their native land, when they have deliberately resolved on subjecting it to the miseries of conquest by a foreign, in Grecian language, a barbarian race. That he had so far temporised with Pausanias as to give the Spartans plausible ground for their accusation is probable, and consistent with the tortuous policy which, unfortunately for his glory in honest men's eyes, he always pursued. But to believe that he seriously laboured to establish that dominion which it was his boast to have overthrown; to pull down the fabric of Athenian greatness which his own hand had raised, and with which his glory was indissolubly connected; this would require the most cogent proofs, in place of which we have nothing but a bare report. We may derive a valuable moral from comparing the close of his life with that of Aristides. The latter, after a life spent in the highest commands, with unbounded opportunities for amassing wealth, died in poverty. Themistocles' property, when he entered on public life, was valued at three talents; when he fled to Persia his effects were confiscated to the value of eighty or one hundred talents, and yet it is said that his friends saved the greater part, and remitted them into Asia to him. Yet who dare avow that he would choose the wealth and fate of Themistocles in preference to the honourable poverty of Aristides? who, that is not entirely devoted to wealth could even feel such a preference? True it is that the crooked course of Themistocles procured a brilliant reception in the Persian court, when all other countries were closed against him: but it is also true that a more disinterested and open life would have obviated the necessity of seeking a foreign refuge. The rancour of party spirit might then have exiled him for a time, as it

exiled Aristides, but it could have done no more. All Greece would have exclaimed in mingled anger and contempt against him who should have dared to connect the name of Aristides with a charge of treason: all Greece was ready to believe Themistocles guilty on the sole evidence of his selfish and intriguing spirit.



CHAPTER XI.



Bust of Thucydides.

Prosecution of the Persian war—Rise of Athens to maritime empire, and consequent undermining of the aristocratical interest—Administration of Cimon—of Pericles—Education of the Athenians—Commencement of the Peloponnesian war.

No country, looking only to external circumstances, had ever a fairer opportunity of establishing a mighty empire than Greece, after the total overthrow of the Persian invasion. The power of Persia broken, Egypt in decay, Rome in its infancy, Carthage distant and intent upon western conquests, her own soldiery inspirited by success,

and preceded by that opinion of their invincibility which is an almost certain earnest of future victory, there seemed to be no power capable of withstanding Greece had she been zealous and unanimous in prosecuting foreign conquest. But instead of tracing the march of a victorious nation to empire, these pages will describe little but the growth of civil dissensions, bloody enmities, and long and destructive warfare between kindred states. Until the reign of Alexander, the Greeks never possessed a foot of land in Asia or Africa beyond the narrow territories, acquired long before the period of which we treat, of the numerous cities which lined the Mediterranean, and those smaller seas which communicate with it.

The cause of this want of foreign enterprise is to be sought chiefly in the non-existence of any acknowledged head of the nation, and in the selfishness and want of union which, as we have seen, characterized their councils even in the time of danger. Sparta, in right of her pre-eminent reputation in arms, claimed and was allowed to lead the confederate troops of Greece in the field; but in their councils she had only an equal voice. That reputation, and the lofty, self-denying, though stern and unlovely temper fostered by the institutions of Lycurgus, had excited so much respect, that at the games of assembled Greece the presence of a Spartan was enough to turn the eyes of the spectators from the competitors to himself: and the command of the fleet collected to oppose Xerxes was vested in a Spartan at the instance of the allies themselves, who, notwithstanding the smallness of the Lacedæmonian naval force, refused to serve under any other than a Spartan commander. But the pride and presumed treason of Pausanias soon disgusted the allies, and threw the naval command into the hands of the Athenians; and that people soon converted the force meant to prosecute the quarrel with Persia into an instrument of their own aggrandisement, and assumed an authority nothing less than despotic over free states, which had confederated with them as one equal with another. Hence arose two different and

often conflicting interests: the Athenians powerful by sea, the Lacedæmonians by land. Opposed in the nature of their government as in the nature of their strength, they became the rallying points to which two factions, implacable in their enmity, looked for support; and to the care with which they fomented the civil discords on which their power was based, the evils which we are about to describe may in great measure be referred. But the circumstances which led to this rivalry require to be more fully told.

The states which had confederated to repel the invasion of Xerxes did not rest satisfied with self-defence. After the battle of Salamis, the fleet proceeded to liberate the islands of the Ægean Sea, and the Grecian cities of Asia Minor; and the forces of those states gladly combined with their deliverers to prosecute the war against their common enemy. In the third year after the battle of Salamis, the haughtiness and misconduct of Pausanias so alienated the allies, that the Peloponnesians returned home, and the Asiatic, Hellespontine, and Island Greeks transferred the right of leading their united forces to the Athenians. Aristides' high character for integrity appears to have been the chief instrument in procuring for his countrymen this great increase of power. By his advice they proceeded to draw out an assessment, in which each state, according to its strength, was rated to furnish a certain number of ships, and a stated sum of money, for the purposes of the confederacy; and the difficult and invidious task of apportioning the contributions was assigned to him. This he executed with such success that not a complaint of injustice or partiality was heard. The whole assessment amounted to 460 talents, about 101,000 English pounds. At his death, Cimon, hitherto the partner of his influence, succeeded to the sole possession of it. Cimon was one of the most honest of Grecian statesmen; but he was not governed by that scrupulous love of justice which distinguished Aristides. Under his guidance the first steps were taken towards making the contributions of Greece for the maintenance of the Persian war the means of establishing the

dominion of Athens over Grecian cities. The allied states by degrees grew weary of exertions to which they were no longer urged by a sense of danger; and when it was proposed that they should commute the personal service of their citizens for a sum of money, the Athenians undertaking to provide and man a fleet for the general purposes of the confederacy, the suggestion was readily adopted by many. "By this means Athens was at once obliged to build and employ more ships, and supplied with the means, while the navy of the allies proportionally declined. The Athenians, feeling their strength, became haughtier in their conduct, and more harsh in enforcing the same services which grew to be less punctually rendered. Hence rose wars with the defaulters, in which, Athens uniformly prevailing, the fleet of the conquered city was taken from it, and a heavier tribute levied: and since every such contest brought fresh power and wealth to the predominant state, and diminished the resources which could be at the command of any combination among its dependants, Athens, from the leader, became the mistress of her allies. The first state so subjected was the island Naxos, which revolted, and was conquered in the twelfth year of the Athenian command."* Thus Athens became the best nursery for seamen in Greece, and increased her fleet at the expense of others, who grew weak from the very causes which made her strong. Moreover, having monopolized the naval arm, she was released from all shadow of control from the council of associate states, and was left at full liberty to employ her strength against the Persians, or the pirates, or her own refractory allies, as might best suit the exigencies of the moment. Her power reached its greatest height about the year 450 B.C., when it extended over almost all the islands of the *Ægean*, including *Eubœa*, and over the maritime Grecian settlements in *Thrace*, *Macedonia*, and *Asia Minor*. On the continent her influence directed the policy of *Megaris*, *Bœotia*, *Phocis*, and the *Opuntian Locris*; by the strong

* *Library of Useful Knowledge: Greece*, p. 46.

towns of Naupactus and Pegæ, she commanded both ends of the Corinthian gulf; Trœzen was subject to her; her influence was predominant in Achaia; and Argos, always jealous of its overbearing neighbour, Lacedæmon, was bound by that jealousy in close alliance with the only countervailing power.

So great a change in the political influence of Athens did not occur without corresponding alterations in the private circumstances and temper of the citizens. Cimon was himself attached to aristocratical principles, and endeavoured to maintain close alliance with Lacedæmon; but still the necessary result of the policy and events which raised Athens to such extensive empire was to diminish the influence of the aristocracy of wealth and birth, and to throw a preponderating influence into the hands of the poorer class of citizens. Such, in Greece, was the invariable effect of cultivating naval power. The military force of every people consisted principally of *hoplites*, as they were called—literally, armed men, whose equipment consisted of body armour, greaves, a helmet, a large shield, a long spear, and sword. A body of these troops was always attended by a body of men more lightly armed, and fitter for reconnoitring, for the duty of outposts, and similar uses; but little to be relied on in the shock of battle, and principally composed of slaves and mercenaries. The heavy foot, on the contrary, in the flourishing times of Greece, were almost universally citizens, and citizens of the richer classes; for the state supplied no armour, and the poorest class could not afford to keep the expensive equipment necessary to pass muster in the ranks. The citizens of Athens were divided into four classes, according to their income. The two wealthiest were obliged to keep a horse, and serve in the cavalry, an expensive service in the barren country of Attica: the third class was obliged to be provided with the full equipment of a heavy-armed soldier: the fourth were allowed to serve in that capacity, if possessed of proper armour: if not, they were enrolled among the light-armed force, or served in the fleet. The poorer class, at Athens as elsewhere, was the most numerous;

and it is evident, from what has been said, that its importance would increase or diminish in proportion as the main exertions of the state were made by sea or by land. Where naval power was uncultivated the power of the sword fell into the hands of the rich: where war and commerce were alike carried on by sea, the lowest class became important by its services, as well as by its numbers. Hence the cultivation of maritime strength was always considered favourable to the cause of democracy.

The total devastation of Attica in the Persian invasion must, of course, have reduced great numbers from competence and comfort to poverty. For some time the lucrative war carried on against Persia at once filled the treasury, and enabled the state to supply the wants of this class by military pay. A further resource was found in the splendid liberality of Cimon, who, possessed of vast hereditary wealth, had the good fortune to increase it greatly by plunder and other perquisites of a commander-in-chief, without incurring the charge of dishonesty or rapaciousness. This wealth was freely spent in maintaining his influence. His gardens and orchards were thrown open to the public; a table was daily spread at his house for the free use of the poorer citizens; and he readily lent money to those who required it. Partly at his own, partly at the national expense, many splendid public buildings were erected while he ruled the councils of the state; and an example was given for the still more splendid subsequent improvements of Pericles. But in spite of his services and his magnificence, Cimon experienced a reverse of favour, to which his professed aristocratical principles, and avowed admiration and attachment to Sparta, contributed in no small degree. In the year 461 B. C. he was banished by ostracism, and a new party came into power, headed by Ephialtes and Pericles, then a young man just rising into eminence. These men were pledged to hostility to Sparta, and bound to gratify the poorer citizens, by whose favour they had been raised to direct the councils of the republic.

To preserve that favour it was necessary that the present administration should not be eclipsed by the

splendour and beneficence of the preceding one. But the means of the leaders were far inferior; nor from their private fortunes could they feed the hungry, and provide splendid places of resort for the tenants of hovels, as their magnificent predecessor had done. The only resource was to bribe the public with its own money; and with this view a law was proposed, by which the issues from the treasury, which hitherto had been controlled by the court of Areopagus, were placed under the immediate command of the people. The next step was to allow pay for attendance at the general assemblies and in the courts of justice, in each of which a considerable number of *dicasts** sat, taken indiscriminately from the citizens. This measure was introduced and carried by Pericles, or, according to another statement, there was before a small sum allowed for these services, which was increased by him. The total number of persons who thus derived no small part of their subsistence from the public funds was very considerable; for in one alone of the courts fifty persons was the smallest number that ever sat, and the usual number was from two to five hundred. Sometimes two or more courts were consolidated, and then from one to two thousand persons sat in judgment at once. The effect of this law was twofold: it secured the popularity of those who had procured such a boon for the poor; it secured also a large attendance of the poor in the general assembly, for attendance there secured a sufficient provision for the wants of the day; and as stated assemblies occurred four times in thirty-five days, the payments for these and other extraordinary attendances, with public feasts, and sacrifices, and duty in the courts, formed nearly a subsistence for those who had neither property nor employment.

Not less careful was Pericles to gratify national pride by the splendour of his public improvements. In this respect he far outdid even Cimon, and stamped on Athens that character of magnificence in respect of its public

* We cannot with propriety use either of the terms judges or jurymen; the *dicasts* were both judge and jury. —

buildings, which has made it the wonder and admiration of strangers even to this day. One of the long walls, the temple of Eleusis, and the Odeon or musical theatre, were erected under his direction; and, above all, the Parthenon was built, and adorned with those celebrated sculptures, part of which, after the lapse of twenty-three centuries, have found a new resting-place in our national Museum. The Propylæa, or gateway leading into the Acropolis, was another of his works, "which are the more wonderful because they were completed in so short a time, and have lasted so long; and because, while perfect, each of them was redolent of antiquity in respect of beauty, and yet for grace and vigour it seems to this day as if each of them were newly finished; there resides in them such an ever-springing freshness, which prevents the injuries of time being felt, as if each of the said works were tenanted by an ever youthful spirit, a soul never waxing old, which still retains them in that vigour."*

To meet the expenses of a line of policy such as we have described, the mere revenue of Attica was of course insufficient; but the impost originally contributed by the confederate Greeks towards avenging the aggression of Persia was rigorously exacted, and applied without scruple to the private purposes of the state and its governors. It was matter of great complaint throughout Greece, that the money raised for the common benefit of the nation should be perverted to the luxury of an overweening and oppressive city; and the political enemies of Pericles made it a constant subject of invective in the public assemblies, that the people of Athens were openly defamed for this act of robbery, and that it was "an over-great injury to the rest of Greece, and too manifest a token of tyranny, to behold before their eyes how we do employ the money which they were enforced to gather for the maintenance of the wars against the barbarian, in gilding, building, and setting forth our city like a glorious woman, all to be gauded with gold and precious

* Plutarch, Pericles.

stones; and how we do make images and build temples of wonderful and infinite charge. Pericles replied to the contrary, that the Athenians were not bound to make any account of this money unto their friends and allies, considering that they fought for their safety, and that they kept the barbarian far from Greece, without troubling them to set out any one man, horse, or ship of theirs, the money only excepted, which is no more theirs that paid it than theirs that received it, so they bestow it to that use they received it for. And their city being already well furnished with all things necessary for the wars, it was good reason they should bestow the surplus of their treasure in things which, in time to come, would make their fame eternal. Moreover, he said, that whilst they continue building, they should be presently rich, by reason of the diversity of work of all sorts, and other things which they should have need of; and to compass these things better, and to set them in hand, all manner of artificers and workmen that would labour, should be set on work. So should all the citizens and townsmen receive pay and wages of the common treasure, and the city by this means should be greatly beautified, and much more able to maintain itself.”*

As a defence the reply is valueless, but it shows how small a portion of reason or justice is sufficient to supply a pretext when backed by power, and points out the certain, and not unmerited, lot of those nations which give the sword out of their own hand, and trust to wealth to purchase defenders. Farther ground for discontent might be found in the increased amount of the tax, which, at the beginning of the Peloponnesian war, had been raised from four hundred and sixty talents, the sum levied by Aristides B.C. 477, to about six hundred talents.

To this splendour Pericles seems to have been led alike by policy and taste. The Athenians were naturally a vain people, and their self-complacency was nurtured by the unequalled rapidity with which their fame and power had increased. Every thing which ministered to that fame became precious in their eyes, and a good

* Plutarch, North.

instance of this is given by Plutarch, if we may trust the accuracy of that gossiping and amusing historian. "Pericles, perceiving that his enemies did still cry out upon him, that he did vainly waste and consume the common treasure, and that he bestowed on the works the whole revenue of the city, one day, when the people were assembled together, he asked before them all whether they thought that the cost bestowed were too much. The people answered him, a great deal too much. Well, then, said he, the charges shall be mine (if you think good), and none of yours; provided that no man's name be written on the works, but mine only. When Pericles had said so, the people cried out aloud, that they would none of that (either that they wondered at the greatness of his mind, or else for that they would not give him the only honour and praise to have done so sumptuous and stately works), but willed him that he should see them finished at the common charges, without sparing for any cost."* "In his political course," says Professor Heeren, "Pericles was guided by a simple principle, to be the first in his own city, while he secured it the first place among cities." Hence in arts, as well as in arms, he wished it to obtain pre-eminence; and, instead of following the narrow policy of Sparta, which discouraged in every way the approach of strangers, he endeavoured to make his city the resort and wonder of the world, and to adopt every means of turning the wealth of other nations into her treasury; and he was himself singularly qualified to direct the public taste, as well as the public arms, not merely by natural talents, but by a more refined education than, when he was young, generally fell to the lot of a Greek citizen. The celebrated philosopher Anaxagoras was his preceptor in youth; the musician Damon, characterized by Socrates as possessing every quality which could fit a man to take charge of youth, and said to be deeply versed in matters of government, was his friend and associate in riper years; in the company of the celebrated Aspasia he is said to have found advan-

* Plutarch, Pericles: North.

tages, as well as fascinations, such as no other society in Greece could supply; and his personal accomplishments were set off by a style of oratory which, in polish and eloquence, surpassed all that had yet been heard, and singularly caught the minds of the Athenian people.

In all this there was much to refine and elevate the national taste; there was also much which injured the national character in more vital points, as we may now easily trace in the consequences. Few Athenians had recourse to any species of labour, except military service, to gain a subsistence. Of those who had no means, the number, the just claims, and the expectations were alike increased by the Persian invasion; and the events which followed it, first a long and profitable war, secondly the consecutive administrations of Cimon and Pericles, who lavished, the one his own, the other the national resources, to keep the poor in good humour, were well calculated to foster their natural dislike to labour, and equally natural desire to enjoy the produce of other men's industry. The result was, that a people jealous to excess of its own supreme authority, and braggart of its own exertions in the cause of freedom, became a harsh and oppressive ally in name, but sovereign in reality (our language affords no term to express accurately the relation in which the dependant, *ὑπήκοος*, stood to the leading state), ruthlessly vindictive in punishing every attempt to shake off its yoke. "Had Athens commanded no resources but its own, it would have been impossible to support in idleness so large a portion of the people; but the subject states were liable to unlimited extortion. Any proposed exaction, however oppressive, was eagerly caught at by the swarm of idlers who looked for maintenance and pleasure to the lavish expenditure of the state, and their number and frequent attendance in the assembly would generally ensure the success of any measure which united them in its favour. Hence arose a crew of profligate demagogues, who obtained a paramount influence by being ready to propose, at any cost of justice, humanity, and ultimate advantage, whatever proposed to the multitude

an immediate gain, and who frequently turned their ascendancy to profit, by taking presents from the allies, as the price of forbearance and protection. The populace drew both gain and pleasure from the submission of the allies; the pride of each was flattered, in proportion to his personal insignificance, by the homage paid him as a citizen of the sovereign republic; their hopes of individual enjoyment were all bound up in the continuance and extension of the empire, and the passions thence resulting were studiously exasperated by unprincipled orators: what wonder, then, that we shall henceforth find their sway as jealous as oppressive; and, in case of revolt, their vengeance as cruel as their rule had been unjust!"*

Another cause of the deterioration of the Athenian character is to be found in the growth of a new system of education about this period, and the introduction of new accomplishments, new teachers, and new principles. The brief notice of this subject, which we shall introduce, is principally derived from the only English writer who has treated it in a popular manner, and who is well calculated to discuss the question by his intimate acquaintance with Aristophanes and the Socratic writings, though his vehement dislike of all democracies, and especially the Athenian, is such as to make his testimony on some points rather suspicious; we allude to Mr. Mitchell, the translator of Aristophanes. It is to be premised, however, that these are matters on which great difference of opinion exists among scholars; and that many persons among those best qualified to judge take a very different view of the subject from that here given.

Before the age of Pericles, the education of an Athenian of rank and wealth consisted in obtaining, through the instructions of the grammarians, an intimate acquaintance with the writings of the older poets, especially Homer; after which he passed into the hands of the music-master, and the keeper of the gymnasium, or

* Library of Useful Knowledge: Hist. of Greece, p. 50.

school of bodily exercises. The two latter were the most important branches of education, not so much for purposes of display, as for the effect which they were held to possess in the formation of character. To those whose curiosity prompted some research into the secrets of nature, the schools of the philosophers offered abundant gratification. There they might hear treated the most abstruse topics of physical and metaphysical science; the nature of God, the nature and origin of the universe and its most striking phenomena, the nature of man, were all discussed with a zealous interest and attention on the part of the pupils, which appears to have led them into no small extravagances.* But some years previous to the Peloponnesian war, as the cause of democracy gained ground, and the minds of all men were fired by the examples of Themistocles, who had risen from the people, or Pericles, who had risen on the people, to fame and power, a species of knowledge more suited to practical purposes was eagerly sought after, and a class of teachers soon rose up to supply the want. These persons, the most distinguished of them not natives of Athens, were called sophists, and they boldly undertook to supply all deficiencies, and qualify their pupils for any station whatever which they might be called on to fill, or for any pursuit by which they hoped to rise to eminence. They professed to have acquired, and to be able to teach, all knowledge; and one of them, by way of advertising his own merits, appeared at the Olympic games with a stock of literary samples of various sorts, tragedy, epics, &c.; and further, with the announcement that every article of use or ornament about his person was the work of his own hands. This folly, if it were all, might excite a smile; but these men laid claim to a more mischievous power, that of being able to confound truth and falsehood, and to show how either of two contradictory propositions might be proved with equal certitude and success, according to the in-

* See the Preliminary Discourse to Mitchell's Aristophanes, note, p. liv. xv.

terest or inclination of the disputant. Under a democracy, eloquence was the readiest path to power; and eloquence, they taught, was of all acquisitions the most important; that eloquence, and skill in word-splitting, by which, as Plato has farcically described it in the *Euthydemus*, it could be shown that a man could speak and be silent at the same time; that it was equally easy to a professor of this art to prove that a man knew or did not know the same thing, or that he both knew it and did not know it at the same time; and by which the sophists, in the above-named dialogue, prove to the satisfaction of their fellow-disputant, "that he had a father—that he had no father—that a dog was his father—that his father was everybody's father—that his mother had a family equally numerous, in which horses, pigs, and crab-fish were all common brethren, with the same rights and ties of consanguinity and affection."* This was the eloquence by which, according to the grave professions of Protagoras, the founder of the school, the worse might be made to appear the better cause, and right and wrong confounded; so that alike in the agora, in the courts of justice, or in social converse, no standard of right or wrong could be set up, except that which the convenience of the speaker should dictate. "As the first step towards this important acquisition, the pupil was carefully initiated in all the niceties of that language, whose mazes and subtleties sometimes led from premises apparently simple to conclusions which looked more like legerdemain than the effects of sober reasoning. He was then told that there were two sorts of persuasion; that by the one an auditor's mind was imbued with actual knowledge, by the other with a knowledge consisting only in belief and opinion; and when he was asked which of these two persuasions rhetoric was meant to create in the courts of law and the public assemblies, he was answered, belief of knowledge without actuality; for rhetoric was defined to be the art of enabling an ignorant man to speak among the

* Mitchell, p. lviii.

ignorant, with more appearance of knowledge than the man who was actually master of the subject under discussion."* Having imparted this valuable faculty to the pupil, the next step was to teach him to use it fearlessly, undeterred by any visionary considerations of right or wrong, of justice or injustice. With this view it was asserted, "that might makes right; that the property of the weak belongs to the strong; and that, whatever the law might say to the contrary, the voice of nature taught and justified the doctrine. They proclaimed that the only wise persons were those who aspired to the direction of public affairs, and who were stopped in this attempt by no other consideration than the measure of their capacity; and they added that those who, without any command over themselves, could acquire a command over others, had a right to have their superior talent rewarded by possessing more than others. For temperance, self-restraint, and a dominion over the passions and desires, were set down by them as marks of dulness and stupidity, only calculated to excite derision. They asserted, with confidence, that nature itself made it both just and honourable, that he who wished to live happily, ought to permit his desires as large a sway as possible, and in no way to restrain them: they bargained indeed for the possession of courage and political wisdom in their scholars; but once in possession of these, a man, in their opinion, was at liberty to administer to his passions in all other respects, and to leave nothing und indulged which could contribute to their gratification. They declared that those who attached disgrace to this doctrine, did it only from a sense of shame at wanting the means to gratify their own passions; and their praises of moderation they asserted to be mere hypocrisy, and to proceed solely from the wish of enslaving better men than themselves. With the same power of self-indulgence, they maintained, these assertors of moderation would pursue the same path as those who were now the objects of their animadversions; they concluded

* Mitchell, p. lxxv.

therefore that it was ridiculous in those who were above restraint, to lay a restraint upon themselves, and they proclaimed, in the most unqualified terms, that luxury, licentiousness, and intemperance were alone virtue and happiness, and that all other declarations were mere specious pretences, compacts contrary to nature, the triflings of men who deserved no manner of consideration.

“The sacred principles of justice were treated with a contempt equally daring. They often began with the bold definition that justice itself was nothing but the interest of the strongest ; that the masterpiece of injustice was to appear a man of virtue without being really one ; and they proceeded to prove (and in a town like Athens the demonstration perhaps was not difficult), that, on all occasions, the just man came off worse than the unjust. In the mutual compacts of private life, they said, the just man is always a loser, and the unjust a gainer. In public affairs, when a contribution is to be made, the one with equal property always contributes less than the other ; whereas, when a disbursement is to be made, the former receives nothing, and the latter is a considerable gainer. If both are in office, one mischief at least happens to the just man ; his private affairs go to ruin from being neglected, and the public give him no redress, merely because he is a just man ; he becomes odious besides to his relations and friends, because he will not, for their service, overstep the bounds of right ; whereas, to the unjust man the very reverse, said they, is the case. To paint this more forcibly, they drew the picture of a tyranny, where the unjust man was in the highest state of felicity, the voluntarily just in the lowest state of depression ; and they proved that the former, though outraging every rule of humanity, was loaded with praises, not only those who were conscious of his crimes, but even those who had suffered by them, considering him as a happy man ; for if injustice, added they, is ever blamed, the blame proceeds not from the fear of committing it, but from the fear of suffering by it. Improving upon this notion, they declared that to be

able to commit an injury was in itself a blessing, to receive an injury was in itself an evil ; but that there was more of ill in receiving, than there was of good in committing, and that to set this right was the origin and object of legislation. Justice therefore they considered as the medium between the greatest of blessings, that of committing wrong with impunity, and the greatest evil, which consists in not being able to revenge an injury received ; and hence, according to them, was derived the common attachment to justice, not as being a blessing in itself, but because persons being in a capacity to hurt others, oblige them to consider it as such ; for he, they continued, who has power in his hands, and is really a man, would never submit to such a convention : it would indeed be complete folly to do so. Give the good man and the bad man, they triumphantly concluded, power to act as they pleased ; present them with rings like that of Gyges, which should make them invisible, and what will be the consequence ? The virtuous man would soon be found treading the very same path as the villain, and if he should be so ‘adamantine’ as to act otherwise, he would be considered as the most pitiful and stupid of his species. In public indeed every one would eulogise his virtues ; but this would be done with a design of deceiving others, and in the fear of risking fortune if a contrary course were pursued.”

The character and doctrines of the sophists have been made known to us chiefly by the writings of an inveterate enemy, and it is expedient therefore to collect any testimony which may confirm the picture, such as it is given by Plato. Such corroboration will be found in the unexceptionable testimony of the contemporary historian. His description of the state of morals in Athens at the time of the plague, is sufficient proof that some powerful influence had been at work to root out every principle of justice and morality ; and we may trace in it the natural consequences of the sophistical tenets, as they are de-

* Mitchell, p. lxxvii. lxxxii.

livered by Socrates, through the medium of Plato. We shall hereafter have occasion to quote this celebrated passage, and can therefore do no more here than refer to it.

The new-formed empire of Athens had lasted some forty years, and had allowed time for those changes, which we have endeavoured to describe, to exert their seductive influence on the national character, when circumstances, which it is not necessary here to relate, led to a quarrel between the Athenians and Corinthians, the latter being a principal member of that confederacy consisting chiefly of Peloponnesian states of which Sparta was the head. At their instance a congress of the confederates was held at Sparta, in which they complained loudly of their injuries, and reproved the sluggishness of the Spartan councils, which had suffered so many Grecian cities to be deprived of independence. Finally it was resolved that the treaties then existing between Sparta and her allies, and the Athenians, were broken, and that a subsequent meeting should be held, to consider the expediency of declaring war. This took place in the autumn of the year 432 B.C.

War, however, was not immediately declared. Several embassies passed between Sparta and Athens, partly for the sake of procrastinating a contest for which neither party felt quite ready, partly to produce discord and embarrass the Athenian government. One of these was commissioned to require that due atonement should be made for the murder of Cylon, to avert the anger of the gods from Greece. The Lacedæmonians required that all persons descended from the guilty family should be banished, in the number of whom Pericles was included by his maternal descent, not from any hope of obtaining his banishment, but with the view of throwing on him the odium of involving the city in war on his own account. He eluded the difficulty by reminding them of a similar instance of impiety committed by the Spartan government, which had never been atoned for, and bidding them first make due expiation for that. A second and a third embassy were sent, without producing any hopes

of a reconciliation ; and when the people were convoked to consider of the last of these, Pericles addressed the assembly in a speech urging it decidedly to reject the haughty demands of the Peloponnesians, which were merely the forerunners of more extensive requisitions. He proceeded to encourage them by contrasting their own wealth with the scanty revenue of the Peloponnesians ; a poverty which prevented the latter from engaging in long and distant wars, and which had kept them unacquainted with maritime affairs. He admitted that in one battle they might be victorious over all the rest of Greece ; but asserted that they would neither expect nor be able to support a long and expensive war. He explained the manner in which he proposed to conduct the contest which he advised, abandoning Attica to the ravage of the enemy, and taking ample satisfaction by a series of predatory excursions round the coast of Peloponnesus. " It is a very different matter," he continued, " that the whole of Attica, or that a small part even of Peloponnesus, should be laid waste. For our antagonists can find no other territory except by fighting for it ; whereas for us there is abundance, both on the continent and in islands ; for the dominion of the sea is a mighty thing ; and consider, if we were islanders, who would be so secure from attack as ourselves ? Now then we should aim at placing ourselves as nearly in that situation as possible, caring not for houses and lands, but looking to the safety of our city and the sovereignty of the sea, and taking care not to be led by passion to give battle to the Peloponnesians, who are much our superiors in number. For if we beat them, they will fight again in equal force ; but if we are beaten, we lose our allies, wherein lies our strength. Let our lament be for men's bodies, not for houses and lands, for these do not get men, but men get them."*

The Athenians approved of what Pericles had said, and answered, that they would do nothing upon compulsion ; but were willing to submit any disputes to arbitra-

* Thucyd. i. 143.

tion, according to the terms of existing treaties. And the Lacedæmonians departed home, and sent no more embassies.

This was the origin of that long and injurious struggle to Greece, commonly called the Peloponnesian war, in the illustration of which these pages will be chiefly employed. It has obtained a celebrity greater than even its own intrinsic importance might have gained for it, in consequence of having been narrated by a contemporary historian, to whose accuracy, impartiality, and profound knowledge, generation after generation have borne one never-varying testimony; and who has well fulfilled the lofty task which he proposed to himself, of leaving, as his memorial, no collection of idle stories, written to gain the favour of the moment, but an everlasting record of those things which have been, and which will again, according to the nature of man, recur in something of a similar form.*

Hostilities commenced in the year B.C. 431. The Lacedæmonian league comprised all the states of Peloponnesus, except Argos and Achaia, which were neutral; and nearly all northern Greece, except Thessaly and Acarnania, which sided with Athens. The Athenian confederacy contained, besides those two states, Corcyra, Zacynthus, and the newly established city of Naupactus, held by the Messenians, who had revolted from Sparta. Chios and Lesbos furnished ships of war, and were treated as allies; the other islands of the Ægean, except Melos and Thera, together with the Greek cities on the coast of Asia and of Thrace, except a few which had revolted, were tributary subjects, deprived of their ships of war, and subject to the uncontrolled will of the Athenian people. Of the means of Athens at this time, we have a tolerably minute account given by Thucydides. The annual revenue paid by the allies has been stated at about six hundred talents, besides other sources, such as port-dues and taxes. It is much to the credit of Pericles' administration, that, notwithstanding his lavish expendi-

* Thucyd. i. 22.

ture, there was in the treasury at this time six thousand talents of coined money, besides a quantity of uncoined gold and silver, in public and private dedications, vessels of sacrifice and divine service, and Persian spoils, amounting to five hundred talents more. There was also much valuable property in the temples, which they might use if necessary, and especially the golden ornaments and drapery of the statue of Minerva in the Parthenon, made of the purest metal, and forty talents in weight, which could be taken off without injury to the statue, and replaced when circumstances should admit of it. The military force of the state amounted to 13,000 heavy-armed foot, fit for foreign service; 16,000 of the same class, comprising the old and young, and foreigners resident in Athens, who were exempt from foreign service, but liable to be called upon for home duty; 1200 cavalry; 1600 archers; and 300 triremes fit to put to sea. Reckoning the crew of a trireme at 200 men, the crews of 130, which number put to sea at once in the first year of the war, would amount to 26,000 men.

In accordance with the policy recommended by Pericles, and at his suggestion, the Athenians abandoned the whole of Attica to the ravages of the enemy. They removed into the city their families and household furniture, even to the wooden framework of their houses; their live stock was transported to Eubœa and the neighbouring islands. "Very grievous was this removal to them, because they had always been used, the greater part of them, to reside in the country."* This preference of a country life the historian traces to the earliest times; the result no doubt of that superior security of life and property which induced the Athenians, at an earlier period than other Greeks, to desist from wearing arms as part of their usual dress. It was the more grievous, he adds, because after the Median war, in which all Attica was laid waste with fire and sword, their establishments had been newly restored; and, we may conjecture, with new comforts and elegances. Nor

* Thucyd. ii. 14.

was the inconvenience confined to quitting the homes to which they had been long attached. The introduction of such a multitude within the walls of a single city led, of course, to serious inconvenience. Some few had town houses, or found a home with friends and relations; others set up the framework of their houses or constructed habitations as they could in the unoccupied spaces within the walls; and the poorest sheltered themselves in the towers of the walls, or in the temples, or wherever a place of refuge could be found. Even that space of



Pericles. From a marble bust in the British Museum.

ground which was called the Pelasgian,* of which an oracle had declared that it was "better uninhabited," was not kept unoccupied by the superstition; "and the oracle," says Thucydides, "seems to me to have turned out contrary to what was supposed, for the threatened evil came not by reason of the forbidden indwelling, but the necessity of the indwelling came through the war."† Those evils, of which we have before spoken, arising from a large, indigent, and idle population, with little employment, except in state affairs, and little subsistence, except from the public treasury, must of course have been greatly increased by such an addition to the inhabitants of the city.

* See Dr. Arnold's note, Thucyd. ii. 17.

† Thucyd. ii. 17.

CHAPTER XII.



Medal of Boccaccio.

Historians of the plague—Sketch of the four chief pestilences recorded—Origin of the disease—Plague of Athens—Of Constantinople—Of Florence—Of Milan—State of medical knowledge—Plague of London.

A HISTORY of the plague, in the hands of one qualified to do justice to the subject by medical knowledge joined to extensive research, might be rendered attractive in no common degree. It has chanced that the phenomena, moral and physical, of several remarkable pestilences have been described by writers of unusual power, whose eloquence has communicated to them a literary interest, independent of that which they must otherwise have pos-

essed as striking passages in the history of man. Of these Thucydides is the earliest; and the plague which desolated Athens in the second year of the Peloponnesian war, though not the earliest mentioned in profane records, is the first of which any particular account has reached us. A sufferer as well as a spectator, he has related its symptoms, described the wretchedness which it inflicted on his country, and analyzed its moral effects with the accuracy and profoundness of reflection by which he is distinguished above all other historians; and no part of that work which he has delivered to us as an "everlasting possession"* has excited more admiration than this. Hippocrates, himself a contemporary, if not an eye-witness, has left a medical account of the same disease, and from these authorities Lucretius has composed one of the finest and most celebrated passages in his philosophical poem.† Procopius also has left a description of the plague‡ which during the reign of Justinian ravaged nearly all the known world, evidently modelled upon Thucydides, and not an unsuccessful imitation of him. In later times the great plagues of Florence and London have found worthy chroniclers in the two great novelists, Boccaccio, who was an eye-witness of that which he describes, and Defoe, the verisimilitude of whose narration is such, that it is difficult to believe it anything but what it proposes to be, the narrative of a person who had witnessed the eventful time of which he wrote. Defoe, however, was under three years old when the great plague of London broke out. Boccaccio appears, like Procopius, to have written in imitation, perhaps in emulation, of the Greek historian: Defoe has treated the subject in his peculiar style, and at much greater length than any of those whom we have named; and intermixing, as we must believe, a quantity of facts and observations, the result of minute inquiry, with a framework of fiction, has produced a narrative stamped, like all his works, with a singular appearance of reality, and remarkable for simple pathos and homely vigour of description.

* κτήμα ἐς αἰῶν, i. 22.

† Lib. vi.

‡ Persic. lib. ii.

We may divide pestilences into two classes: those which, as if dependent upon some noxious property of the air, have spread successively from country to country and devastated a large portion of the world, and those which have raged in a particular spot or within small limits, and which appear therefore to have been generated by some local accident, as is said to have occurred in Africa, B.C. 126 (A.U. 628), by the fetid exhalations from dead locusts,* or to have been introduced from other places, and to have been propagated rather by infection than the transmissive qualities of the air. To ascertain the specific difference between the two is probably beyond the reach of medical science; but the distinction is important, since the latter are susceptible of control by quarantine laws, which are powerless, perhaps worse than powerless, to arrest the former. Of these the most celebrated are quaintly described in a manuscript account of the great plague of London, preserved in the British Museum.†

“Of universall, or oecumenicall‡ plauges, the most spreading and destructive that I have met with in history are these four: first that of Athens, which fell out in the Peloponnesian warr, before Christ 428, described most fully by that eminent historian, Thucydides, in his second booke, who had been sicke of it himselfe, but restored, and from him by that great promoter and enlightener of the Epicurean, or Corpuscular Philosophy,

* Kircher, *Scrutinium de Peste*. He quotes Diodorus (without reference), and Orosius, book v., as his authorities: the passage in Diodorus we have not been able to find.

† “*Δοιμογραφία*, or an experimental relation of what hath happened remarkable in the last Plague in the city of London, &c. by W. Boghurst, apothecary in St. Giles’ in y. Feilds: London, 1666: MS. Sloane, 349.” Our attention was directed to this book as being likely to contain some curious details of the plague of 1665, but with the exception of this prefatory matter it is too exclusively medical to suit our purpose.

‡ “Oecumenical (*οἰκουμενικὸς*, from *οἰκουμένη*), relating to the whole habitable world.”—*Johnson*.

the poet Lucretius, in the last part of his last booke. This plague, though it bee vulgarly called the Athenian plague, because it did great execution there in that city, yet indeed not on Athens alone, but as Thucydides tells us, beginning at Æthiopia overran Afrika and transferred itself into Asia, and thence into Europe.

“The second famous, or œcumenicall plague which hath occurred to my reading, was in the raigne of Vibius Gallus, and Volusianus his sonne, according to Calvisius, of Christ 253. This plague is also related to have had its originall in Æthiopia, and from thence to have diffused itself into all the provinces of the Roman empire, and to have lasted fifteen yeares without intermission. How it raged in Alexandria and Ægypt wee understand from an epistle of Dionysius, the bishop of that city at that time, recorded by Eusebius in his viith book, cap. 22. Hee tells us it fell promiscuously on the heathens and the christians, though most heavily upon the former, that noe house was free from the dire effects of its rage. From other parts of Affrique wee understand from St. Cyprian, the bishop of Carthage, in his excellent sermon *de Mortalitate*, made on purpose to animate and strengthen the christians, who were joynt and fellow sufferers with the heathens, *unde præsentis mortalitatis copia*, as he tearms it—‘the large measure of the present mortality:’ and of its rage at Rome wee find observed out of the Roman history by Calvisius that there dyed of it daily to the number of 5000, and therefore Brightman and Mead, both men sufficiently learned, in their comentaryes upon the Revelations, interpret this plague to be one of the fearful judgments foretold to breake forth upon the opening of the fourth seale, chap. vi. 8. And Justus Lipsius, a critick of noe ordinary reading, saith of this pestilence in his book *de Constantia*, lib. 2, ‘*non alia unquam major lues, &c.*’ that his reading did not afford him an example or president of a greater plague, considering the many countreys it infected in the severall yeares that it lasted.

“The third universall plague was that which happened in the raigne of Justinian, and took its beginning

in the yeare of Christ 532, and this also, as the former, is sayd to have descended from Æthiopia. Wee have a copious description of it by Procopius in his *Persicorum*, lib. 2. And we are informed by him that it raged very much in Byzantium, or Constantinople, for four months space, and that when it was in its height, there dyed of it every day 10,000 and upwards; and this is the pestilence related by Evagrius the ecclesiasticall historian, which lasted, as he says, fifty-two yeares, not continuall, but by severall returns and revolutions, and of this pestilence he was sick himselfe. And Greece shared not only in the contagion of it, but also Italy, as wee read in Paulus Diaconus, and it swept away Pope Pelagius, the predecessor of Gregory the Great, about the year 580; ffor I conceive this plague to be that in the raigne of Justinian, propagated into remoter countreys, and lengthened out to this tearme, much according to the forementioned computation of Evagrius. It also overran Fraunce in the year 583, and this I conceive to be that which plagued the Britons here in that vacation betwixt the Romans government and the Saxons, in Vortigern's tyme, when the living could scarce bury the dead.

“The fourth œcumenicall plague which I have taken notice of, was in the year 1347, ‘*quæ violentissima fuit, et totum mundum pervasit in annis sex et ita vastavit ut nec tertia pars hominum superesset*:’ they are the words of Calvisius, ‘it was most violent and ran over the world in six years, and soe wasted Europe that not the third part of men were left alive.’ To omit other parts, and see what it did at home in our owne countreye, Mr. Cambden reports in his *Britannia*, that in the yeare 1348 this plague was soe hot that in Wallingford, in Barkshire, it dyspeopled the town, reducing their twelve churches to one or two, which they now retayne. In London it had soe quick an edge, that in the space of twelve months there was buried in one church-yard, commonly called the Cistercian, or Charter-house, above 50,000. They write further that through the kingdom it made such havock that it tooke away more than half

the people; and it is noted there dyed in London alone, between the 1st of January and the 1st of July, 57,374. See Daniel, in 22, Edward III."

It may be worthy of remark that of these plagues three are traced to Egypt or Ethiopia, while the fourth, as we shall presently see from Villani, is said to have originated in the north-east of Asia. Kircher, in his '*Scrutinium de Peste*,' has given a catalogue of the most remarkable pestilences recorded, in which he mentions only one other universal plague, in the year 1400, but relates neither its origin nor its history. Another very destructive one broke out in the year 170 in Babylonia, which spread through the provinces, and carried off a vast number of persons at Rome. Galen was then living in the capital, and speaks of this disease as very similar to that described by Thucydides.

The present chapter will be employed in describing some of those pestilences which are most celebrated, either for the abilities exerted in describing them, or the ravages which they have committed; and will include the plagues of Athens, Constantinople, Florence, the plague of Milan in 1630, and of London in 1665. It is not our plan to give either a general history of the plague or a detailed account of the rise and fall, the symptoms and method of treatment of each particular scourge. The passages which we extract from Thucydides, Procopius, and Boccaccio, are complete in themselves; from those later pestilences, of which no master mind has given a comprehensive view, we have endeavoured to select such particulars and to quote such passages as show the moral consequences of the visitation, rather than to disgust by an often repeated story of suffering, or give a hospital chronicle of the varying intensity of the mischief from day to day.

We begin then with Thucydides' account of the plague at Athens in the second year of the war.

"In the very beginning of summer, the Peloponnesians and their confederates, as before, two-thirds of the military power of each state, invaded Attica, under the command of Archidamus, son of Zeuxidamus, king of

Lacedæmon, and after they had encamped themselves wasted the country about them. And before they had been many days in Attica the plague first began among the Athenians, said also to have seized formerly on divers other parts, as about Lemnos and elsewhere, but so great a plague and mortality of men was never remembered to have happened in any place before. For at first, neither were the physicians able to cure it through ignorance of what it was, but died fastest themselves, as being the men that most approached the sick, nor any other art of man availed whatsoever. All supplications of the gods, and inquiries of oracles, and whatsoever other means they used of that kind, proved all unprofitable, and at the last, subdued by the greatness of the evil, they gave them all over."

"It began (by report) first, in that part of Æthiopia that lieth above Ægypt, and thence fell down into Ægypt, and Afric, and into the greatest part of the territories of the king.* It invaded Athens on a sudden, and touched first upon those that dwelt in Piræus; insomuch as they reported the Peloponnesians had cast poison into their tanks, for springs there were not any in that place. But afterwards it reached the upper city, and then they died a great deal faster. Now let every man, physician or other, concerning the ground of this sickness, whence it sprung, and what causes he thinks able to produce so great an alteration, speak according to his own knowledge; for my own part, I will deliver but the manner of it, and lay open only such things as one may take his mark by, to discover the same if it come again, having been both sick of it myself, and seen others sick of the same.

"This year, by confession of all men, was of all other for other diseases most free and healthful. But if any man were sick before, his disease turned to this; if not, yet suddenly, without any apparent cause preceding, and being in perfect health, they were taken first with an extreme ache in their heads, redness and inflammation of

* Of Persia.

the eyes; and then inwardly their throats and tongues grew presently bloody, and sent out a preternatural and fetid breath. Upon this followed sneezing and hoarseness, and not long after the pain together with a mighty cough came down into the breast; and when once it was settled in the stomach it caused vomit, and with great torment came on all manner of evacuations of bile that physicians ever named. And most persons were taken with a hollow hiccough, bringing on violent convulsions, which in some ceased quickly, but in others were long before they gave over. Their bodies outwardly to the touch were neither very hot nor pale, but reddish, livid, and beflowered with little pimples and welks; but so burned inwardly, as not to endure the lightest cloths or linen garment to be upon them, nor anything but mere nakedness; but rather most willingly to have cast themselves into cold water. And many of them that were not looked to, possessed with insatiate thirst, did this into the tanks. And whether they drank more or less, it was all one; and restlessness and wakefulness prevailed throughout. And while the disease was at the height, their bodies wasted not, but resisted the torment beyond all expectation, so that most of them died on the ninth or seventh day, of the inward fever, whilst they had yet strength, or if they had escaped that, then the disease falling down into their bellies, and causing there great exulcerations and immoderate looseness, they died many of them afterwards through weakness. For the disease (which took first the head) began above and came down, and passed through the whole body; and if a man survived through the worst part of it, still it caught hold of his extremities, and left its mark. For it fell upon the fingers and toes; and many survived with the loss of these members; some also with the loss of their eyes. And others presently upon their recovery were taken with such an oblivion of all things whatsoever, as they neither knew themselves nor their acquaintance.

“ For this was a kind of sickness which far surmounted all expression of words, and both exceeded human nature in the cruelty wherewith it handled each one, and ap-

peared also otherwise to be none of those diseases that are bred amongst us, and that especially by this. For all, both birds and beasts, that use to feed on human flesh, though many men lay abroad unburied, either came not at them, or tasting perished. And the proof is this: there ensued a total failure of all such fowl, which were not then seen, neither about the carcasses, or any where else: but by the dogs, because they are familiar with men, this effect was seen much clearer.

“So that this disease (to pass over many strange particulars of the accidents that some had differently from others) was in general such as I have shown; and for other usual sicknesses, at that time no man was troubled with any, or if there were any they turned to this. Now they died, some for want of attendance, and some again with all the care and physic that could be used. Nor was there any to say certain medicine, that applied must have helped them; for if it did good to one, it did harm to another; and as far as strength and weakness of constitution were concerned, it carried off all alike, even those that were most carefully nursed. But the greatest misery of all was, the dejection of mind, in such as found themselves beginning to be sick (for they grew presently desperate, and gave themselves over without making any resistance), as also their dying thus like sheep, infected by mutual visitation; for the greatest mortality proceeded that way. For if men forbore through fear to visit them, then they died forlorn; whereby many houses were emptied, for want of some one that would tend the inhabitants. If they forbore not, then they died themselves, and principally the honestest men. For out of shame they would not spare themselves, but went in unto their friends, especially after it was come to this pass, that even their domestics, wearied with the lamentations of them that died, and overcome with the greatness of the calamity, were no longer moved therewith. Still those who had recovered felt the most compassion both on them that died and on them that lay sick, as having both known the misery themselves, and now no more subject to the danger. For this disease never took any

man the second time, so as to be mortal. And these men were both by others counted happy, and they also themselves, through excess of present joy, conceived a kind of light hope never to die of any other sickness hereafter.

“ Besides the present affliction, the reception of the country people and of their substance into the city, oppressed both them and much more the people themselves that so came in. For having no houses, but dwelling at that time of the year in stifling booths, the mortality was now without all form; and dying men lay tumbling one upon another in the streets, and men half dead about every conduit through desire of water. The temples, also, where they took up their temporary abode, were all full of the dead that died within them; for, oppressed with violence of the calamity, and not knowing what to do, men grew careless both of holy and profane things alike. And the laws which they formerly used touching funerals were all now broken, every one burying where he could find room. And many for want of things necessary, after so many deaths before, had recourse to shameless burials of their dead. For when one had made a funeral pile,* another getting before him, would throw on his dead and set fire to it. And when one was burning, another would come, and, having cast thereon him whom he carried, go his way again.

“ And the great licentiousness, which also in other kinds, was used in the city, began at first from this disease. For men more readily ventured on things which they formerly concealed, or durst not do freely and at their pleasure, seeing before their eyes such quick revolution of the rich dying, and men worth nothing inheriting their estates; insomuch as they judged it best to enjoy their fortunes briskly and merrily, considering them and their lives alike held but from day to day. As for pains, no man was forward in any action of honour to take any, because they thought it uncertain whether they should die or not before they achieved it. But that which pro-

* A pile of wood, which, when they laid the corpse on it they fired, and afterwards buried the bones.

duced present enjoyment, or which immediately led to it, was now received to be both honourable and advantageous. Neither the fear of the gods, nor laws of men, awed any man. Not the former, because they concluded it was alike to worship or not worship, from seeing that alike they all perished: nor the latter, because no man expected his life would last till he received punishment of his crimes by judgment. But they thought there was now over their heads some far greater judgment decreed against them; before which fell they thought to enjoy some little part of their lives.

“Such was the misery into which the Athenians being fallen, were much oppressed; having not only their men killed by the disease within, but the enemy also laying waste their fields and villages without. In this sickness also (as it was not unlikely they would) they called to mind this verse, said also of the elder sort to have been uttered of old:—

A Doric war shall fall,
And a great plague withal.

“Now were men at variance about the word, some saying it was not *Δοιμὸς* (i. e. the Plague), that was by the ancients mentioned in that verse, but *Λιμὸς* (i. e. Famine). But upon the present occasion the word *Δοιμὸς* deservedly obtained. For as men suffered, so they made the verse to say. And I think, if after this there shall ever come another Doric war, and with it a famine, they are like to recite the verse accordingly. There was also reported by such as knew, a certain answer given by the oracle to the Lacedæmonians, when they inquired whether they should make this war or not, ‘that if they warred with all their power, they should have the victory, and that the god * himself would take their parts;’ and thereupon they thought the present misery to be a fulfilling of that prophecy. The Poloponnesians were no sooner entered Attica, but the sickness presently began, and never came

* Apollo, to whom the heathens attributed the immission of all epidemic or ordinary diseases.

into Peloponnesus, to speak of, but reigned principally in Athens, and in such other places afterwards as were most populous. And thus much of this disease.*

The disease remitted during the winter, but in the following summer broke out again, and carried off Pericles among its victims. In that one death Athens received more irretrievable injury than from the loss of all the multitude who perished, for he was the last of that succession of statesmen who founded and matured her greatness. Hitherto the directors, the virtual sovereigns of the state,† had been truly demagogues: they led, those who succeeded to their influence were led by, the people, and preserved their power by yielding to and encouraging passions which they ought to have controlled.‡ Two years later the plague broke out again. Altogether it carried off 4400 heavy armed soldiers, and 300 horsemen; that is, 4700 male citizens in the prime of life, between the ages fixed by law as the limits of active service, of the highest and middle ranks alone, besides an innumerable multitude of other persons.§

Aristophanes and Plato furnish abundant evidence, if farther evidence were necessary, that about this time a great change did take place in the manners and morals of the Athenians. The reader will find this subject, which is one of great interest, and would require a separate chapter for its investigation, noticed in our introductory chapter, and treated at considerable length in the preliminary discourse to Mitchell's Aristophanes there

* Thucyd. ii. 47, 54. Hobbes's Translation has been used throughout the volume; it has been compared with the original, and corrected where necessary.

† It was in name a state democratical, but in fact a government of the principal man.—Thucyd. ii. 65.

‡ See the analysis of the Knights in chap. iv.

§ See Thucyd. iii. 87. The Athenian army at the commencement of the war consisted of 13,000 heavy armed soldiers of the former class, and 1200 horsemen, including the horse archers, who were not citizens. Such being the mortality of the upper classes, we may safely suppose that a quarter of the whole population perished.—Thucyd. ii. 13.

quoted. We here allude to it only to guard against the supposition that this total demoralization was brought about in the short space of a few months by the influence of terror and recklessness : a thing not in itself probable, not confirmed by the experience of similar visitations, and not the necessary meaning of the assertion, that "the licentiousness of the city flowed at first from this disease." This was the crisis of the change ; the pestilence determined the victory of an evil influence which had long been spreading, and marked the period from which that change was to be dated. Hitherto the open practice of the new doctrines had been repressed by laws, and by the received opinion of good and evil ; but now that the insecurity of life and property banished thought of the future, by alike extinguishing both hope and fear, "for no man expected that his life would last till he received punishment of his crimes by judgment," and that the general disorder and distress removed all check of public opinion, the doctrines of the sophists sprung at once to maturity, and bore abundant fruit after their kind.*

Another circumstance, apparently more trivial, is not unlikely to have had considerable effect—the collection of the whole Athenian people within the walls. A proverb tells us that idleness is the mother of all vice ; and few things are more unfavourable to moral habits than the crowding of a large population within inconveniently narrow bounds. Both these sources of evil were united in Athens. The inconvenience experienced by the people for want of accommodation has been already described. For their employments, agriculture was the only business to which a free Athenian would *personally* apply himself, although the wealthy carried on manufactures by means of slaves ; and from the practice of agriculture the Athenians were now entirely cut off. In consequence, a great number of families had no support

* See Mitchell's Preliminary Discourse, p. 74, 84, and the Platonic Dialogues there quoted. See also the Clouds, especially the concluding part, and the dialogue between the Logos Dikaïos and Logos Adikos.

whatever, except what they derived from the public revenue, in the form of sacrifices, a large part of which was distributed among the people, public entertainments, and the pay for attending the public meetings and the courts of justice. Needy men readily embrace doctrines which place the property of others at their disposal; and thus the nation was already half demoralized when the plague broke out, and removed the fear of present punishment without enforcing that of future retribution. Temptation and bad example soon completed the work.

Procopius, a Greek historian of the sixth century, was a witness, and has left a minute description of the great plague which in the reign of Justinian ravaged nearly the whole of the known world. It is evidently modelled upon the celebrated passage in Thucydides which we have just extracted. The most remarkable circumstance in this pestilence is its extraordinary length. When Evagrius of Antioch wrote his Ecclesiastical History it had lasted fifty-two years, with alternate fits of relaxation and vigour; but during this long period the earth was never wholly free from its ravages.

“About this time a pestilence occurred, which almost put an end to the human race. Now it is always probable that daring men will propose some reason to explain those things which come down on us direct from heaven, as persons skilled in such matters love to deal in wonderful causes beyond man’s discovery, and to shape strange schemes of natural philosophy; knowing that what they utter is not sound, but satisfied if they can cheat the vulgar into believing it. But for this particular calamity we can in no way account, either in word or thought, except by referring it to God. For it fell on no particular portion of the earth, nor race of men, nor was it confined to any season of the year, which things might have given some pretence for thinking it of natural origin, but spread over all the earth, and ravaged all nations, the most unlike and opposite to each other, sparing neither constitution nor age. For whether men differed in place of abode, or in diet, or temperament, or in anything else in which they do differ from each other,

in this disease the variance availed nothing; and it fell on some in summer, on others in winter, and on others at the other seasons. Let would-be philosophers and speculators upon lofty things speak, then, each according to his own opinion. I proceed to show whence this disease came, and how it operated to destroy men.

"It began in Egypt, among the inhabitants of Pelusium, and, dividing, spread on one side to Alexandria and the rest of Egypt, and on the other into Palestine, and from thence over the whole earth, advancing by its proper way and at its proper season; for it seemed to advance according to a prescribed plan, and to abide in every country for an appointed time, sparing none as it passed, and extending on either side to the bounds of the habitable world, as if apprehensive lest any recess should escape. For it missed no island, no cave, no mountain summit inhabited by man; or if it did, and spared, or laid its hand but lightly on the dwellers there, then it returned at a later time, and never touching their neighbours, whom before it had attacked most bitterly, quitted not that spot until the measure of the dead was fully and justly made up,* proportionate to the mortality of the neighbourhood in the former season. The disease always began at the sea-side, and spread thence into the interior. It reached Constantinople, where I then happened to be, at midsummer in the second year of its progress. The manner of its attack was this: visions of spirits,† in all sorts of human shapes, were seen. The sufferers thought they met a man, who struck them, and were taken ill the same moment that they saw the spectre. At first men strove to turn aside these spirits, by uttering the holiest names, and hallowing themselves as best they could; but they gained nothing by this, for very many who fled even to the churches, perished there; and at

* Evagrius adds to this a greater marvel; that the citizens of infected places, who were absent from home, sickened and died, even where no other trace of the plague appeared.

† φάσματα δαιμόνων.

last, even when their friends called them, they would not attend, but shut themselves up at home, and pretended not to hear, though their very doors were yielding to the knocking; so terrified were they, lest it should be some spirit.* Others again were taken ill in a different way, and saw some one in a dream, who stood over them and struck them; or heard a warning voice, that [they were numbered with the dead. But most fell sick in the following manner, unwarned of their fate either by sleeping or waking visions. They felt feverish on first rising, or while walking or otherwise employed. There was no change in colour, no heat, as when fever supervenes, no inflammation; but until evening the fever was so slight that it suggested no idea of danger, either to the patient or the physician; and indeed none that were ill of it expected to die. But on that day, or the next, or sometimes a few days after, the buboe appeared, mostly in the groin, but in the

* This curious passage may be illustrated from a pamphlet entitled 'Medela Pestilentia, wherein is contained several Theological Queries concerning the Plague,' &c., by Richard Kephale. "Some I have talked with, who have ingenuously confest they, at their first infection, have felt themselves manifestly stricken, being sensible of a blow suddenly given them, some on the head and neck, others on the back and side, &c.; sometimes so violently that they have been as it were knockt down to the ground, remaining so for a time senseless; whereof some have died instantly, others in a short time after."—p. 49. This statement, however, is not entitled to implicit credit; for it is the writer's object to prove the plague a direct infliction from God, without the intervention of secondary causes. "There are two sorts of plague, the one simple, the other putrid. The simple plague is the very influence of the striking angel executing the vengeance of God on the bodies of men. This kind of plague ariseth from no distemperature of blood, putrefaction of humours, or influence of stars, but falleth merely from the stroke of God's punishing angel. (Such were the plagues of old, as you may read in Exod. xii. and Numb. xi. 16, 25; also 2 Sam. xxiv. and 2 Kings xix.)—*Ibid.*

arm-pit also, or behind the ears, or sometimes on the thighs.

"Thus far the course of the disease was alike in all; for the rest, I cannot tell whether the difference of symptoms arose from difference of constitutions, or is referable to the will alone of Him who sent it. For some fell into a deep stupor, others into raving madness, and each suffered agreeably to the kind of his disorder. For those who were attacked by stupor, forgetting everything to which they were accustomed, seemed always asleep. And if any person were in attendance on them, from time to time they took food; but some who were neglected perished for want of food. The maniacs, on the contrary, were afflicted by sleepiness, and continual apparitions, which attacked them, as they thought, meaning to kill them; so that they raised a great disturbance, and made horrid cries, endeavouring to escape. And their attendants, worn by constant labour, suffered most severely, insomuch that men pitied them no less than those who were ill, not from any danger of contagion* (for no physician nor other person fell sick from contact with the sick or dead; since many employed constantly in nursing or burying, against all expectations, survived this service, and many, for whose illness no cause could be discovered, died at once), but on account of their hard labour did they pity them. For it was necessary to replace the patients who would throw themselves out of bed, and roll on the floor, and to drive and hale them back as often as they tried to rush out of the house; and such as could find water wanted to plunge in, not from desire to drink, for they went mostly to the sea, but at the suggestion of a disordered mind.† And there was

* This passage is remarkable as being probably the earliest assertion extant, of any disease known by the name of *plague* being uncommunicable by contact. Of all the following accounts of similar pestilences, the dread of contagion will be found to form one of the most striking features.

† More probably from that burning heat which Thucydides tells us produced the same effect at Athens.

also much trouble in administering food, to which they were very adverse. Many died of starvation, or by throwing themselves down heights. Mortification of the buboes carried off such as experienced neither stupor nor frenzy, and they died at last exhausted by agony. It would be supposed that the others underwent equal torture; but this was not so, the mental disease, however slight, precluding all sensation of pain.

“The physicians, embarrassed by their unacquaintance with the forms of the disease, and thinking that the element of it was secreted in the buboes, determined to examine the dead bodies; and opening these tumours, found in them something in the likeness of a coal. Some died immediately, some after many days; some threw out black pustules, the size of a lentil, all over their bodies, and these lived not one day longer, but died on the instant. Many were carried off at once by vomiting blood. One thing I have to observe, that the most eminent physicians predicted the death of many, who soon after, against all expectations, had nothing ailing, and persisted that many would live, who at that moment were on the point of dissolution. Thus, throughout the disease, there was nothing for which human reason could account,* but in almost every instance some unlooked-for event occurred. The bath did good to some, and no less harm to others. Many who were neglected, died; others unexpectedly survived. Medical treatment had contradictory effects on those who tried it; and, in brief, the wit of man found no means of safety, either to ward off or to overcome the evil, but its attack was without apparent cause, and the recovery spontaneous.

“The disease lasted in Constantinople four months, and was at its height for three. At first the number of dead was little greater than ordinary; then the evil increased till it amounted to 5000 daily, and at last to 10,000, and even more. At first every man took care himself to bury those in his household, casting them

* οὕτως αἰτία τις ἦν οὐδεμία ἐν ταυτῇ τῇ νόσῳ ἐς ἀνθρώπου λογισμὸν φέρουσα.

secretly, or by open force, into other persons' tombs; but at last all was confusion. For slaves remained without masters; and men, formerly rich and happy, were left without common attendance by the sickness and death of their slaves; and many houses were quite emptied of inhabitants: so that some remained many days without burial, because there were no persons that knew them. When the Emperor heard of this, he sent money and soldiers from the palace, and ordered Theodorus, an officer called by the Latins the Referendary, who received all petitions addressed to the Emperor, and signified his pleasure with respect to them, to take charge of this matter; so that they whose houses were not yet entirely desolated performed the funeral rites of their own connexions; and Theodorus, at the imperial expense, and partly also at his own, buried those bodies that had none to care for them. But when the tombs that were already constructed were filled with corpses, trenches were dug all about the city, into which every one cast the dead as he could, and went away; until the gravediggers, wearied out, took off the roofs of the towers on the wall of the district called Sukai,* into which they cast the bodies promiscuously, and when they were full replaced the roofs. The fetid smell from hence reached the city, and much annoyed the inhabitants, especially when the wind lay in that quarter.

“All rites usual at burials were then neglected: there were no processions, no hymns, nor dirges; but it was sufficient if a man bore off a corpse upon his shoulders, and cast it down in the maritime quarter of the city. From thence the bodies, piled in heaps on barges, were carried off wherever chance directed. At that time the factions† into which the people were before divided, relaxing from their mutual hate, applied themselves conjointly to pay due reverence to the dead, and buried all persons without distinction, whether they had any claim

* The fig-trees: it included the modern suburbs of Pera and Galata.

† For some notice of these singular and virulent factions, see chap. iv.

on them or not. And those whose delight had been in base and evil pursuits, shook off their lawless course of life, and accurately performed the duties of religion, not from having repented and learnt to govern their passions, nor from being suddenly turned into lovers of virtue ; for it is impossible to change thus easily the natural temper, or the result of long continued habit, except by means of a divine interposition. But all were terror-struck at the scenes which surrounded them, and, in the expectation of immediate death, could scarce help assuming a temporary decency of conduct. But these same men, when they were quit of the plague, and supposed themselves in safety, through its departure to some other quarter, returned even to a worse frame of mind than before, and displayed still greater profligacy in their lives, surpassing their former selves in wickedness and lawlessness. So that one might truly affirm that this disease, either by chance or pre-appointment, accurately distinguished and passed by the worst men. But this was shown afterwards.

“ At this time you could hardly see any one buying or selling in Constantinople ; but those who kept in health sat at home, and took care of the sick, or bewailed the departed. Or if you did meet any one abroad, he was carrying a corpse. All trade was idle ; the craftsmen desisted from their crafts, and all persons abandoned whatsoever works they had in hand ; so that a perfect famine revelled in a city abounding usually in all good things. To have enough of bread, or of any thing else, was difficult, and was considered a great privilege, so that it was thought that some sick persons met with an untimely end for want of necessaries. To sum up, no robes of state were to be seen in Constantinople, especially while the Emperor himself was ill ; but in a city where the court of the whole Roman empire was held, all persons dressed like private men, and remained at home. Such was the course of the pestilence in Constantinople and throughout the empire : it also fell upon the Persians and all other barbarians.”*

* Procopius de Bello Persico, lib. ii. cap. 22, 23.

On comparing this pestilence with that of Athens, we cannot fail to observe their different effects upon the conduct and tempers of those who were exposed to their influence. In the one, party spirit (and the factions of Constantinople were pursued with a violence as desperate as their origin was trivial) was hushed, and the most profligate were awed into temporary decency; in the other, every chain of society was loosed, every duty toward God and man forgotten in the intoxication of danger, and the craving to drown thought in sensual pleasure. "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die," was truly the maxim of the Athenians. Surely this difference can only be ascribed to the powerful effects produced by the received belief of a future existence upon the minds even of those who, under common circumstances, seemed regardless of such considerations. Among the Athenians practically no such belief existed; it was the creed of their poets, it was inculcated at their mysteries, but it was devoid of all authority to serve as a rule of conduct. In no age or place in which the Christian religion has been professed, however corrupted in principle or depraved in practice, has that general depravity, which is described by Thucydides, ensued in consequence of a similar calamity. The nearest approach to it is to be found in the great plague of Florence, as related by Boccacio. His account indeed, as being the introduction to a work of fiction, might be suspected of exaggeration for purposes of effect. It is, however, completely confirmed by Matteo Villani, in his continuation of the history of Giovanni Villani, his brother, who himself died in this plague. His narration gives some striking particulars of the duration and extent of the calamity, and of the evil consequences which it left behind it; which will serve well to introduce and corroborate the more picturesque and highly-coloured narrative of Boccacio.

The plague appears to have originated in 1346, in Upper India and China (Cathay), "and coming on day after day, and spreading from nation to nation, within the space of one year it comprehended the third part of the world, which is called Asia. And at the end of this

time it fixed on the nations of the Mare Maggiore* and on the coasts of the Mare Tirreno, in Syria and Turkey towards Egypt, and the shores of the Red Sea, and northwards on Russia and Greece, and Armenia, and other adjoining provinces." From the Mare Maggiore the plague was brought to Sicily, Pisa, and Genoa by some Genoese and Catalanian vessels, which fled thence to escape from it but too late. "Then in the process of the time appointed by God to the nations all Sicily was involved in this deadly pestilence, and Africa, in her coasts and in her provinces towards the east, and on the shores of our Mare Tirreno. And the plague coming gradually westward, comprehended Sardinia and Corsica, and all the islands of that sea; and in like manner on the continent of Europe, it seized on the neighbouring parts towards the west, and extended itself southwards, with more violence of assault than in the northern parts. In 1348 all Italy had the disorder, except the city of Milan, and some parts about the Alps, where it pressed

* The geography of this passage is not quite clear. Mare Maggiore appears to be the Mediterranean, which still retains that name: see the *Vocab. della Crusca*. In French, Mer Majeure is the Black Sea, according to Cotgrave and the *Encyclopédie*. If we adopt this interpretation, the author states that the plague spread from Asia to the Black Sea and the Mare Tirreno, probably the Tyrrhene or Adriatic Sea, and then returns to trace its progress in the Mediterranean. On the whole, the former interpretation seems the more probable, though it involves some repetition. The first gives a general statement of the course which the disease took from Asia to the coasts of the Mediterranean and Adriatic seas, and then proceeds to particularise. It seems to have spread from India through Persia to Syria, Arabia, and Asia Minor (called in the text Turkey towards Egypt), and from China, or the upper part of India, through the north of Asia to Russia and Greece. The Levant trade introduced it into Sicily, Italy, and the west of Africa, whence it seems to have spread backwards towards Egypt. From Italy it crossed the mountains, and spread northward, even to Denmark, &c., which indeed may have received the infection either from their northern or southern neighbours.

little. And in this same year it began to pass the mountains, and to extend itself into Provence and Savoy and Dauphiné, and Burgundy, and along the sea-coast of Marseilles, and of Aigue Morte,* and through Catalonia, so to the island of Majorca, and in Spain and Granada. And in 1349 it had taken in, on the extreme west, the coasts of the ocean in Europe and Africa, and Ireland, and the island of England and of Scotland, and other islands of the west, and all the land within, with nearly equal mortality, except in Brabant, where it did little mischief. And in 1350 it seized the Germans and Hungarians, Friesland, Denmark, the Goths and Vandals, and the other people and nations of the north." The time during which the pestilence raged, in each country which it successively seized upon, is stated by Villani to have been about five lunar months,† lasting at Florence from the early part of April, 1348, to the beginning of September in the same year: and he estimates the mortality in that city and district, and in other regions, as far as report enabled him to form a judgment, at three out of five, of all sexes and ages, reckoning the poor with the rich; the poor, however, being somewhat the most diminished, because the pestilence began among them first, and they had less aid against it, and more discomforts and wants. The neglect, however, both of rich and poor, according to Villani, as well as Boccacio, appears to have been very general; but he adds a notice of the failure of the policy of those who withdrew themselves from the danger, and "shut themselves up in solitary places where the air was healthy, provided with every comfort for living,

* A small town in the province of Languedoc, in the department of Gard. It was formerly a seaport, and Louis IX. of France twice embarked from it for the Holy Land, in 1248, 1269. By the gradual accretion of land at the mouth of the Rhone it is now three leagues from the sea, in a sandy plain, with unwholesome air, from the quantity of stagnant water about it.

† In France this pestilence is said to have lasted about eight months in each place which it attacked.—Sismondi, *Hist. des Français*.

where there was no suspicion of infection, yet in different countries the judgment of God, against which there is no shutting of the door, struck them down, just as the others who had taken no care for themselves. And many others who had made themselves ready for death to save their relations and friends in their sickness escaped, although they had the disorder, and many had it not at all, though they continued this service.”*

— This is an unintentional, and therefore an unsuspicious testimony to the absence of really contagious properties in this pestilence, as well as in the one described by Procopius. Boccaccio, on the contrary, describes the virulence of the contagion in the strongest terms.

Upon this plague, and upon the practice alluded to by Villani, of withdrawing into sequestered retreats, Boccaccio has formed the groundwork of his celebrated collection of tales. In an introduction he describes the phenomena of the disease, and the appearance of the city; and relates how a mixed party of both sexes, casually assembled, resolved to quit a scene of such danger and misery, and seek security in the loneliness of the country, and recreation in each other's society. The tales are supposed to be related by each in turn for the amusement of the rest. Boccaccio's description of the plague runs as follows:—

“It was in the year 1348 that the deadly pestilence reached the noble city of Florence, the fairest of all in Italy; a plague which, whether proceeding from the influence of the heavenly bodies, or sent for our iniquities upon men by the just anger of God for our correction, began some years before in the eastern regions, deprived these of an innumerable quantity of living beings, and then communicating from one place to another, spread itself miserably, without stopping, towards the west. Prudence and human foresight availed nought against it, though the city was carefully cleansed from much filth by officers appointed for that purpose, and all the sick were forbidden to enter it, and much attention given to the preser-

* Matteo Villani, lib. i. cap. 1.

vation of health: nor was there more profit from the humble supplications made to God by devout persons, not once, but often, both in formal processions and in other manners: but the plague began to show forth its sad effects in horrible and wonderful fashion almost in the beginning of the above-named year. The symptoms were not such as they had been in the east, when bleeding at the nose was the sure sign of inevitable death; but at the beginning of the disease certain swellings appeared, alike in men and women, either in the groin or under the arm; some of which grew to the size of a common apple, some to that of an egg, and some more and some less, and the common people called them boils. And in a short time this deadly boil spread from the two parts of the body already mentioned, and began to rise indifferently in every part of the body, and [soon after this the characteristic of the disease began to change into black or livid spots, which appeared on the arms and thighs, and every other part of the body of many patients, in some cases large and few, and in others small and thick. And as the boil had originally been, and still was, a most unfailing indication of approaching death, so were these spots whenever they appeared. Nor did it seem that the skill of any physician, or the power of any medicine, availed to cure these diseases, or was of any service; on the contrary, whether it were that the nature of the evil would not allow it, or that the medical attendants (the number of whom, besides the really skilful, had become exceedingly great, and comprised both men and women, who never had had any medical instruction), in their ignorance did not know whence it proceeded, and consequently could not take proper measures against it, the result was that not only few recovered, but almost all died within the third day from the appearance of the above-named symptoms, some a little sooner and some a little later, and most of them without any fever, or other incidental symptom. And the violence of the plague was the greater, because it spread from the sick to the sound by their mutual communication, just as fire catches dry or greasy substances when they are brought close to

it. And the evil went yet farther; for not only by conversation and intercourse with the sick did the sound get the disease, and the occasion of the like death, but even the touch of clothes, or anything else which had been touched or used by the sick, seemed to carry with it the same disease, and communicated it to the toucher. It is a marvel to hear the tale which I have to tell; indeed had not many, and I myself with my own eyes, seen it, I should hardly have dared to believe, much less to write it, however trustworthy had been my informant. I say then that such was the virulence of the plague in spreading from one subject to another, that not only man gave it to man, but this much more remarkable circumstance often visibly occurred, namely, that something which had belonged to a man sick or dead of the disease, being touched by another animal not of the human race, not only infected it with the disease, but killed it in a very short time; of which my own eyes, as I just now mentioned, among other instances, received proof one day in the following manner:—The rags of a poor man who died of the plague were thrown into the public street, and a couple of pigs came up, and routed among them a great deal with their snouts, as their manner is, and took them in their teeth, and shook them against their faces; and both, in a very little while after, reeling about some time as if they had taken poison, fell dead to the ground upon the rags which they had so roughly handled. Hence, and from many other similar or more alarming circumstances, there arose various fears and fancies in those who still remained alive, and almost all of them tended towards one very cruel conclusion, to avoid and fly from the sick, and everything belonging to them, for every one believed that by so doing he would secure himself. Some were of opinion that moderate living, and avoiding all excess, had much effect towards resisting this calamity: and these made their parties, and lived away from all others, and collecting together and shutting themselves up in houses where there were no sick, and for their better living using the most delicate food and the best wines with the utmost temperance, and avoiding all

luxury, there they tarried, without allowing themselves to speak to any one, or to hear any news from abroad of the dead or the ill, passing their time in music and such pleasures as they could obtain. Others held a contrary opinion, and asserted that the surest remedy for the disease was to drink freely, and to enjoy themselves, and to go about singing and amusing themselves, and to indulge their appetites in every way they could, and to laugh, and make sport of everything that occurred. And just as they said they acted, as far as they could; going night and day now to one tavern and now to another, drinking without stint or measure, and doing this for the most part in other men's houses, provided only that they found anything there that was to their taste or fancy. And this they could easily do, because every one, as if he had no longer to live, had, as it were, abandoned his property, so that most houses had become common; and a stranger used them, if he happened to come to them, just as their own masters would have done. With all this brutal conduct, they always avoided the sick as much as they could. And in this affliction and wretchedness of the city, the respected authority of laws, both divine and human, was almost entirely fallen to decay and dissolved, from the condition of their ministers and officers; for these, like other men, were all dead or sick, or else left so destitute of assistants that they could perform no duty: so that every one might do whatever pleased him best.

“Many others held a middle course, not confining themselves so closely in their diet as the first, nor indulging themselves so freely as the second in drinking and other excesses. These used things in moderation, according to their appetites, and without shutting themselves up, went about, some of them carrying flowers in their hands, some scented herbs, and some divers kinds of spices, which they often applied to their noses, thinking it best to cherish the brain with scents of this kind, since all the air seemed thick and noisome with the stench of the dead bodies, and the diseased parts, and the medicines. Others were of a more inhuman opinion

(though perhaps a safer one), and said that there was no better remedy against pestilences, nor so good, as to run away from them. And many men and women, influenced by this reasoning, and caring for nothing but themselves, abandoned their own cities, their own houses, their habitations, and their relations, and their property, and went to other men's country establishments, or at least to their own: as if the anger of God, when stirred up to punish the iniquity of men with this pestilence, would not follow them wherever they were, but had only determined to destroy those who were to be found within the walls of their city; or as if they thought that no one ought to remain in it, and that its last hour was come. And although these, with their various modes of thinking, did not all die, so also did they not all escape: on the contrary, many of every opinion growing sick everywhere, those who while themselves well had given the example to those who still remained so, were left to languish almost entirely deserted. And, not to mention that one fellow-citizen avoided another, and hardly any neighbour took any care of another, and relations seldom or never visited each other, with such alarm had this calamity seized on the hearts of men and women, that brother abandoned brother, and uncle nephew, and sister brother, and often the wife her husband; and, which is yet stranger and hardly credible, fathers and mothers were shy of visiting and attending upon their children, as if they were not their own. The result was, that the countless multitude of men and women who were ill, had nothing to depend upon, except either the kindness of friends, and these were few, or else the avarice of servants, who were induced by large and disproportionate wages to give their attendance. And even of them the number was small, and men and women they were of rude understanding, and generally unaccustomed to such services, and hardly of any use except to hand to the patients such things as they asked for, or to observe when they died: and often while rendering such services as these, they lost their lives for their pains. From this desertion of the sick by their neighbours, and relations,

and friends, and this scarcity of servants, there spread a practice such as had hardly ever been heard of, that no lady, however elegant, or fair, or young, if taken ill, would object to have a man in attendance on her, be he what he might, young or old, or was ashamed to discover to him any part of her person, just as she would have done to a woman, if the need of her disorder did but require it: and this perhaps in after times, rendered those who recovered less scrupulous in their conduct. The same want of attendance also occasioned the death of many, who might perhaps have escaped if they had had assistance; and thus partly for want of fitting services, which the sick could not have, and partly from the violence of the plague, the number of those who died day and night in the city was so great, that it was astounding even to hear, much more to see: and thus, almost of necessity, there arose among those who were left alive practices contrary to the former custom of the citizens.

“It was the custom, as we still it see to this day, that female relations and friends assembled in the house of the deceased, and there bewailed him, with his yet nearer female connexions. And his male neighbours and many of his townsmen, with his own nearest friends, met separately from the women before his house; and thither, according to his rank, came also the clergy, and the deceased was borne on the shoulders of men of his own rank, with funeral ceremony of wax tapers and chanting, to the church which he had chosen for a burial-place before his death. But these observances, after the fury of the plague began to rise, almost entirely ceased, and other new practices came in their room. For not only did people die without having many women about them, but there were a good many who passed away from this life without having any one to witness it: and few indeed were those, to whom were granted the piteous lamentations and bitter tears of their connexions. On the contrary, instead of these, were heard in most cases laughter, and jests, and good fellowship: and ladies for the most part laying aside the tenderness of

their sex, had very completely made themselves masters of this practice, as thinking it for their own safety. And few were there whose bodies were followed to the church by more than ten or a dozen of their neighbours; and the bier was not borne by honourable citizens, friends of the deceased, but a sort of grave-diggers who came from the lowest order of the people, and did these services for hire, took it up and carried it with hurried steps, not to the church which he had himself appointed before his death, but generally to the nearest, following four or six clergy with few tapers, and generally without any; and then the priests with the assistance of these grave-diggers, without troubling themselves about any over long or solemn offices, laid the corpse as quick as possible in the first burial-place which they found unoccupied. The condition of the lowest class, and probably of a great part of the middle class, was full of far greater wretchedness than this; for these were generally kept to their houses either by hope or by poverty, and thus remaining in their neighbourhoods, they sickened by thousands in the day, and receiving no service or assistance, they almost all died without any thing to save them. Many were there who came to their end both by day and night in the public streets, and many others who died in their own houses, and their neighbours had no knowledge that they were dead, till they discovered it by the stench of the putrefying corpses: and the whole place was full of these and others who died on every side. In most neighbourhoods one practice was observed; namely, that the people of the vicinity, moved as much by the fear that the putrefying of the dead bodies might injure themselves, as by the affection which they had borne to the departed, with their own hands, and by the assistance of porters, when they could get them, brought down from their houses the corpses of those who were already gone, and set them before their doors; and there, especially in the morning, any one who had gone about might have seen them without number. Then biers were brought thither, and there were some who for want of regular

biers laid the corpses on tables. Nor was it only once that one bier bore two or three corpses at the same time ; but a long list might be made, where the same bier held the wife and the husband, or two or three brothers, or father and son, or some such load. And infinitely often did it happen, that when two priests were going with a crucifix for some corpse, three or four biers were carried after it ; and the priests, when they thought they had one body to bury, had six, or eight, or sometimes more. Nevertheless, the dead were not honoured with any tears, or lights, or attendance ; on the contrary, matters had come to that [pass, that no more care was had of men who died, than now would be of goats : so that it very plainly appeared that the greatness of the calamity had taught even the simplest and most unthinking, the lesson which the natural course of events had not been able, by few and slight sufferings, to impress upon the wise, namely, the necessity of patience under suffering. So great was the number of the bodies which were every day, and almost every hour borne in concourse to every church, that the consecrated ground was not sufficient for the burials, especially if it were desired to give to every body a place of its own, according to the ancient practice. Great trenches therefore were dug in the burying-grounds of the churches, after every part was filled ; into which the bodies which were brought afterwards were thrown by hundreds. There they were stowed layer upon layer, like the merchandise in a ship, each layer covered with a little earth, till they reached the top of the trench. And not to go on any longer hunting out every particular of our past misery, which befel us in this city, I say that while the time was passing so cruelly in it, the surrounding country was not in any wise spared. For there, not to speak of the castles, which in proportion to their size were like the city, in the scattered villages and in the fields the poor and wretched labourers and their families, without any care of physician or aid of servant, by the way side, on the land they tilled, and in their houses, died alike by day and night, not like men, but almost

like beasts. So they became wanton in their habits, just like the townspeople, and paid no attention to their affairs or business ; but all, as if they expected to die on the day which they found they had reached, would do nothing to secure the future produce of their cattle, and of the land, and of their own past labours, but exerted themselves as much as possible to consume those which they found at hand. Thus it happened that the kine, the asses, the sheep, the pigs, the goats, the poultry, and even the dogs, creatures most attached to mankind, driven out of their own houses, went about as it pleased them over the fields, where the corn was left, not merely unharvested, but uncut. And many of them, almost like reasoning beings, after they had fed well in the day, at night returned home without any guidance of their shepherd. What more can be said, leaving the country and returning to the city, but that such and so great was the cruelty of heaven, and perhaps in some degree that of men, that between March and the following July, between the virulence of the pestilential disease, and the bad attendance on the sick, or their abandonment in their need on account of the fear entertained by the sound, more than a hundred thousand human beings are confidently believed to have died within the walls of the city of Florence ; though before this deadly occurrence, perhaps the whole number would not have been estimated so high. Oh, how many great palaces, how many fair houses, how many noble mansions, formerly fully inhabited, now remained empty, from their lords and mistresses to the lowest menial ! Oh, how many memorable races, how many vast inheritances, how many splendid fortunes found themselves left without any right successor ! How many gallant men, how many fair women, how many comely youths, whom not only any common observer, but Galen, Hippocrates, or Æsculapius would have judged in the soundest health, breakfasted in the morning with their relations, companions and friends, and then, the evening after, supped in the other world with their ancestors."

The relaxation of morals consequent upon this pestilence is more fully described by Villani.

“ In this season of the deadly pestilence, Pope Clement VI. made great general indulgences of the punishment of all sins to those who on repentance and confession requested it of their confessors, and died ; and in this mortality every Christian, thinking that he was dying, set himself well in order, and with much contrition and repentance they gave up their souls to God. And the few wise men who remained alive expected many things, which through the corruption of sin, turned out otherwise, the very contrary most marvellously coming to pass. For they thought that such as God by his favour had kept alive, having seen the extermination of their nearest connexions, and having heard the like tidings of all the nations of the world, would have become of better condition, humble, virtuous, of the true faith, and would have kept themselves from iniquities and sins, and would have been full of love and charity one towards another. But now that the mortality was at an end, the contrary appeared ; for men finding themselves few and rich by their heirships and successions to earthly goods, forgetting things past as if they had never been, gave into a more unhandsome and disorderly life than they had used before. For wandering about at leisure they dissolutely indulged in the sin of gluttony, banquets, taverns, delicate food, gaming, running without bridle into luxury, which they sought in strange clothing, and unusual fashions, and unseemly manners, changing the forms of all household goods. And the people, men and women, because of the exceeding abundance which they found of all things, would not labour at their accustomed trades, and would have the dearest and most delicate viands for their subsistence, and married at will ; the maid-servants and all the lowest women dressing themselves in all the beautiful and valuable attire of the honourable ladies who were dead. And almost all our city, without any check, ran into a discreditable course of life, and so, and worse, did the other cities and provinces of the world. And according to all the accounts we have received, there was

no place where the living kept themselves in continence, when they had escaped from the divine wrath, supposing that the hand of God was weary. But, according to the prophet Isaiah, the wrath of God is not shortened, neither is his hand weary : but he has much pleasure in his mercy, and labours in long-suffering, that he may bring back sinners to conversion and repentance ; and he punishes temperately.

“It was supposed that, through the failure of the people, there would for a long time be abundance of every thing which the earth produces ; and, on the contrary, through the ingratitude of men, every thing came to unusual scarcity, and so continued a long time. In some countries there were several unusual famines. So also it was expected that there would be abundance of clothing, and of all other things which are of service to the human body beyond subsistence : and, in fact, the contrary came to pass for a long time ; for most things were worth twice as much as they used to be before the aforesaid mortality, and more. And labour, and manufactures of all sorts, rose regularly to more than twice the ordinary rate. Lawsuits, disputes, controversies and riots arose on every side among the citizens of every country, on account of their inheritances and successions. And our city of Florence long filled her courts with them, with great expenditure and unusual charges. Wars were stirred up, and various scandals throughout all the universe, contrary to the common expectation of men.”

These Italian accounts might be suspected of exaggeration, but they are fully supported by ultramontane authority ; and though the pestilence of 1348 is usually known as the plague of Florence (a distinction which it owes probably to Boccaccio), it raged even more destructively beyond the Florentine territory, and beyond the Italian peninsula. The French and English historians in particular bear testimony to the extent of misery produced by it. “Never in old times was it heard or seen that such a multitude of people lay dead : the evil seemed to grow by imagination and contagion,

far if a whole man visited a sick man, it was very seldom that he escaped. Thus in many towns and villages the priests fled to avoid attending upon the dying: in many places, out of twenty persons, not two remained alive. At Paris, in the hospital of the Hôtel Dieu, the mortality was such, that for a long time five hundred corpses were carried in carts daily to the burial-ground of the Innocents."* "In Provence and Languedec two-thirds of the people were estimated to have perished; in the rest of France one-third. Allowing for the inclination which all men have to magnify those calamities, the naked facts of which are terrible enough, there is here evidence of a mortality hardly to be equalled."†

In England the same pestilence raged with destructive energy among the poor, but spared the higher orders. Hardly any of the nobility or bishops died, with this remarkable exception, that the see of Canterbury was thrice vacated by death in one year. It is also recorded that there was a great murrain among the cattle, and that neither beast nor bird of prey would touch their carcasses. Meat in consequence became exceedingly scarce, and the harvest having failed, not so much for deficiency of crops, as for want of hands to get it in, the distress was very great. About harvest-time a reaper was not to be had for less than eight-pence, nor a mower for less than twelve-pence a day, besides victuals, "which in those days was excessive wages, money having then a tenfold value to what it hath now."

Another celebrated pestilence is that which desolated Milan in the year 1630. The duchy was then subject to Spain, and, like all the foreign dependencies and conquests of that once powerful kingdom, had reason to rue the day that gave it such a master. Domestic misrule, the licensed insolence of the nobles, the supine indifference of the government to all but political crimes, combined with the miseries of almost constant war to destroy the husbandman's hopes and paralyse his industry. At length natural causes seemed to unite with

Continuatio Nangii, ap: Sismondi.
Sismondi, Histoire des Français.

political ones to work evil to this unhappy country. In the year 1627 an unfavourable season and defective harvest produced an alarming scarcity, which was aggravated into famine by a second failure in the succeeding year. The consequences of this scarcity were soon evident in the vast number of persons without employment or means of subsistence, who were congregated in the streets of Milan. It was the pernicious fashion of that time for the gentry to maintain a number of idle and dissolute followers—men regardless of obligations human or divine, who owned no law except their master's will, chosen and valued for their readiness to undertake and dexterity to execute his orders, alike unmindful of their guilt or danger. The rich walked the streets followed by a train of these bravoos (the Italian name is naturalized in our language), swords were drawn upon the slightest pretence, and their brawls openly insulted and defied the law. These men were the first to be turned adrift when vice and luxury began to feel the pressure of want.—“It would have been laughable,” says a contemporary, “had such a feeling been consistent with the consciousness of our own danger, to see the change in those persons who used to be bugbears to all. The nobles now walked unattended, civilly, *hanging their ears* (*demissis auribus*), as if to bespeak peace by their demeanour. No less striking was it to see their domestic bullies, who used to perfume the very air, reduced to beg half naked through the city.”* The sufferings of these ruffians would excite little sympathy, but the famine pressed equally upon the honest and industrious. The rich being compelled by increasing scarcity to contract their expenses, artificers and tradesmen, one after another, were thrown out of employ; and thus the streets were filled with a starving crowd, daily increased by those who flocked from the country and from neighbouring towns, reduced to depend upon charity, and allured to the capital by its superior wealth.

* Ripamonte, *De Peste Mediolani*, p. 17. From this interesting work the whole of the following account of the plague of Milan is taken.

So great was the evil, such the scenes of misery presented to the eye in every street, that the municipal authorities resolved on opening two vast establishments—the lazaretto, or hospital for persons with infectious disorders, and a building usually appropriated to the reception of foundlings. To these places all mendicants and persons without means of subsistence were taken by the police, and maintained at the public expense. At one of these establishments 3000 persons were admitted within a few days, and fresh inmates were continually presenting themselves. Private munificence materially lightened the heavy charge thus laid upon the public treasury. But, then as now, numbers were so devoted to a vagabond life, that rather than accept food, clothing, and shelter, under the moderate restraints necessary to preserve order in such a multitude, they would have remained in rags, exposed to the inclemency of the weather, and dependent even for the bread of life upon casual relief. To quicken the diligence of the police, a small reward was given for each person whom they brought in. At length the discontent among those who were shut up, generated by the restrictions on their liberty, and heightened by a mortality far less probably than that which took place among them while scattered abroad, but more alarming because brought all at once into view, became so great, that the magistrates broke up these establishments, and the misery of unbounded beggary again prevailed throughout Milan.

During this period the pestilence lurked in the Grison mountains: it had even appeared in the capital; but the deaths were few, the disease spread not, and both magistrates and people, with a common infatuation, were eager to deny the existence of danger until it was too late to guard against it. In the autumn of 1629 a further evil visited this unhappy country. The Spanish governor had granted a free passage to a German army, intended to oppose the French interest in the duchy of Mantua. These men, with the brutal licentiousness which preeminently disgraced the mercenary soldiers of that age, inflicted all the miseries of war upon a friendly popu-

lation. Blood, rapine, and fire marked their path; the inhabitants concealed their property, and abandoned their houses, but it was often in vain; their persecutors spread over the country, and if discovered they were compelled by torture to reveal their stores. And as the first of these locusts left nothing for those who followed, the latter often vented their wrath and disappointment upon those poor people, whose only crime was having lost their all. Thus all who could fly, took shelter in the most retired fortresses, and there endured extreme hardship, until the last of these ill-omened allies had disappeared. And such was the devastation, that the miseries of their temporary shelter were little worse than those endured after their return home.*

Still further to increase the terrors of these troops, it was reported that they bore the plague along with them, from which indeed the German armies were said seldom to be entirely free. Superstition added to the general alarm. A comet appeared in 1628; another in 1630. Belief in the malign influence of these bodies was then general. Prophecies were current, said to be of ancient date, denouncing plague and famine in these years. It will be evident to the reader that no place could be better fitted to receive and nourish a pestilential disorder than Milan was at this time. Scarcity of food and want of cleanliness, inseparable from a poor and crowded population, and a summer of unusual heat, combined to favour the reception of the enemy. In November, 1629, a soldier quartered at Chiavenna returned to his home at Milan. He was taken ill, removed to the hospital, and died; and on examination the signs of plague were found on his body, and the subsequent death of all persons who had been under the same roof made it evident that the plague had gained entrance. But at first the progress of the disease was slow, so slow that doubts were entertained whether it were really the plague; and while the magistrates were dilatory and re-

* The 'Promessi Sposi' of Manzoni contains a most vivid and interesting picture of this portion of the history of Milan.

miss in taking the usual precautions, the common people were especially unwilling to admit so unpalatable and alarming a report. Fear of the sufferings, and disgust at the restrictions and discipline of an infected city, made them furious against all who warned them of their danger. The first physician in Milan, a man eminent for charity in the exercise of his profession as well as skill, and therefore highly venerated even by the populace, was assaulted by a mob, and obliged to fly for his life, upon no other provocation than his belief in the reality of the disease.

But unfortunately incredulity was of no avail to check its progress; and at last the magistrates were compelled to place guards and barriers at the gates, and to exclude all persons and all articles coming from suspected places.



From a Medal of Cardinal Borromeo.

Not only the sick, but all persons living in the same house with them, were removed to the lazaretto, or, if suffered to remain, were placed under the charge of an officer appointed to ensure their perfect seclusion. Those whose health was suspected were allowed to remain under similar but somewhat lighter restraint. And having done what was possible in the way of precaution with little benefit, for the mortality increased fearfully, the authorities turned for help to St. Charles Borromeo, the late Archbishop of Milan, whose body, enclosed in a crystal shrine, formed the most precious treasure of the cathedral. There was at least a propriety in applying to him in preference to any other saint in the calendar; for his liberality, and intrepidity, and zeal in his pastoral duties were eminently displayed in 1576, when Milan laboured under the same calamity.

It was determined therefore, with the permission of the church, to carry these relics in solemn procession round the city, and to implore the continued patronage and intercession of the saint, who in life had zealously watched over the temporal as well as the spiritual welfare of his people. It was ordered that no expense be spared to increase the splendour of the rite, and testify due reverence to the hallowed remains; and accordingly the streets through which the pomp was to pass were cleared, and cleansed, and decked with tapestry and other ornaments, as if for a festival. The houses of the poor, and those which the pestilence had left untenanted, were furnished at the expense of the city, or by the piety of some wealthy neighbour. The latter should rather have been left in their desolation, bare and mournful, to testify to the extent of the distress, and implore, more touchingly than words could do it, the divine protection. The shrine was borne through the chief streets surrounded by the priesthood, the nobles, and the magistrates, barefoot, and in penitential dresses, and followed by a multitude: and for a moment all minds were abstracted from their own and the common danger, to gaze upon the mitred skull, visible through its transparent covering, whose eyeless sockets and grinning jaws

might have seemed to mock the hopes so fondly and vainly entertained.

The procession took place on June 3rd: at its close the saint returned to his resting-place; and from that time forward the disease raged with redoubled fury, and the Milanese were reduced to despair. For eight days and nights, however, the shrine was deposited upon the high altar, surrounded by a concourse of votaries, beseeching help with tears and cries. The answer, our author says, was comprised in the number of the dying; and lest the interpretation should be doubtful, that number increased until 1800 perished daily. Strange infatuation! where every man should have avoided his dearest friend as charged with death, to congregate thousands in supplication against an enemy, to whom in that very act they gave a more extensive and deadly power!

The speedy burial of the dead is commonly one of the great difficulties in time of pestilence. Here it was little felt. There was a class of men called *Monatti*, professed attendants on the plague, and ever ready for, and rejoicing in the most dangerous and disgusting services. *Ripamonte* speaks of them as a class well known to everybody, and passes in silence over the origin of the name, and the nature of the reward which tempted, or the tie, whether hereditary or other, which bound them to so desperate a service: curious points on which we have failed to procure information elsewhere. It was the duty of these men to convey the sick to the hospitals, and attend them there; to watch over those who remained at home, and to carry away the dead for interment. Strange and revolting were these funeral processions. They were preceded by two men with bells, who warned all persons to avoid the way, that the *Monatti* were at hand, death and pestilence in their train. Then came carts with the dead piled in disorder, many stripped even of their last covering, when it was such as to excite the cupidity of the ruffians in charge of them; while the long hair of women trailing on the ground, and limbs and heads dangling over the sides, and answering to the rough movements of the vehicle, and fallen bodies

strewn along the ground,* presented a spectacle the more revolting for the grotesqueness that mingled with its horror. Meanwhile the Monatti sat carousing in the midst of death with indecent laughter and jests, and exultation in the general calamity; indulging the avowed hope that the mortality might never cease till the population of Milan was exterminated, and the wealth of her palaces left unowned and undefended, to be appropriated by the plunderer at will. Necessary as these ministers were, their presence added fresh miseries to those under which the city groaned. Reckless and desperate, hating others in proportion as they were loathed and despised, they were prepared for any crime that passion and interest might prompt. Their duty called them into all suspected houses, and at such a season every house lay open to suspicion. Every abode, every room therefore was exposed to their intrusion; and robbery was the most frequent, but not the worst end to which these ill-omened visits were perverted. Other profligates too assumed their dress and ensigns, and sometimes when the true and false Monatti met, strife and bloodshed added new horrors to the sick chamber or the dying bed.

The general distress, as misery is ever prone to credulity, was in no small degree increased by the most absurd and wicked reports. It was supposed that foreign princes had generated, or, at all events, were maintaining the plague, with the view of weakening the power of the state, and taking undisturbed possession of it, when reduced to a solitude. A belief was propagated, that persons were employed to besmear everything likely to be touched with the most foul and pestilential compounds. The walls of houses, the fastenings of doors, household implements, clothes, men's persons, everything fit to spread the infection, nay, the very standing corn in the

* Ripamonte, book i. If the reader can consult the original, he will see that the description is not overcharged. The Monatti, he continued, practised all sorts of insult towards living and dead, and dragged bodies along as rudely as a butcher drives his calves to the shambles.

fields, now ripe for the sickle, were thought to be poisoned by some unseen enemy. The belief originated in an unexplained appearance, the result most likely of some wanton joke or malicious deception. On the morning of April 23rd, the fronts of houses throughout the whole length of the city were observed by the earliest passengers to be marked with spots, appearing as if a sponge filled with the matter of the plague-sores had been pressed against them. The whole population ere long was in a commotion, and poured out to see this strange phenomenon; but this was before the fury of the pestilence, and the alarm created was forgotten, until revived by the increasing mortality. Then reports were circulated, and greedily received, that emissaries of hostile princes were diligently engaged in spreading infectious poison through the city; nay, that the powers of hell, as well as human principalities, were leagued against it, and that the devil had taken a house in Milan, where his head-quarters were established, and the pestiferous unguents prepared and distributed. One man related how, as he stood in front of the cathedral, he saw a chariot drawn by six white horses, and followed by a numerous attendance, in which a person sat, of princely demeanour, though his dark and deep-burnt complexion, his floating hair, the fire of his eye, and the threatening expression of his lip, gave such an air to the countenance as he had never beheld on mortal face. The stranger stopped before him, and bade him mount. He complied, and was carried to a house which appeared like many others; but on entering, he saw strange and wonderful things, in which majesty was mixed with horrors, delight with fear. In one part thick-flashing lightning dispelled the seeming night which reigned elsewhere: here a spectral senate held its meetings; there vast empty chambers and gardens extended, and from the brow of a dimly-seen rock waters poured abundantly into a basin placed to receive them; and he narrated a variety of other prodigies. The tempter concluded by showing him vast treasures, and promising that they should be his own, and every wish be gratified, if he would bow the knee

to him and do his bidding. But the temptation was insufficient to overcome his virtue, and he was suddenly transported back to the spot whence he had been taken. The motive for concocting such tales is as evident as their extravagance: yet they roused the populace to such fury and such jealous suspicion, that many fell victims not to any imprudence, but to the commonest and most natural actions, which the prevailing frenzy interpreted into the dreadful crime of anointing. In sight of Ripamonte, from whom we derive this account, an old man past eighty, well known as a daily frequenter of the church of St. Antony, was seen, on rising from his knees, to wipe the bench on which he meant to sit with the skirt of his cloak. Some women raised a cry, that the old man was anointing the seats. The church was more thronged than usual, for it was a festival-day. The people ran together in an instant: the old man was dragged by the hair, beaten, and kicked; the only thing that saved his life for an instant was the wish to carry him before the judges, and extort some knowledge of his accomplices. "I saw him," says Ripamonte, "dragged away thus, and never heard more of him. I think that he must have died on the instant. Those who were induced by pity to inquire of his character, reported that he was a good and honest man."

With the people in this temper, accusations and convictions for a crime probably fictitious were not wanting. The first victim was a person employed by the tribunal of health to make the daily round of a district, and report the names of all who were ill. He was accused by some women, who described his person, and swore that they saw him from their windows daub the walls with some preparation. Being put to the torture, he endured it with wonderful constancy until the fourth day, and then when the judges, wearied by his firmness, were about to release him, he made a sort of voluntary confession, and named one Mora, a barber, as the person who had given him the ointments. Other circumstances he added, grossly false, as that the barber had given him at the same time a potion which took away all power of con-

fession, until he had undergone a certain process of torture. The house of Mora was found full of medical or chemical vessels and preparations (it was then usual for barbers to practise surgery), which he declared were meant as preservatives to be distributed among his friends. The physicians who inspected them were of a different opinion, and declared them to be prepared for poisons; and on their report the barber was put to the torture, where, after several times alternately confessing and recanting, he at length made full acknowledgment of his guilt, and of all the methods which he had employed. Others, meanwhile, were apprehended upon the same charge, and made similar confessions under the cogent arguments of the rack; and all were put to death with circumstances of no common cruelty. Mora's house was demolished, and a column built on the spot where it stood, with an inscription to commemorate his guilt. A sort of madness seems to have been epidemic, and it is not improbable that some persons may have been led to attempt the crime by the mere force of imagination, as sometimes a murder of unusual horror seems to work upon minds morbidly susceptible of such impressions, till they believe themselves irresistibly driven to commit the same offence. Some persons who were taken within the lazaretto, with boxes and bottles, as if prepared to collect the putrid humour of the plague-boils, which was believed to be the chief ingredient of these diabolical preparations, confessed their guilt, persisted in their confession under the severest tortures, and yet under the gallows asserted, that though they died willingly in expiation of other guilt, they were innocent in this point, even of the knowledge of unguents, or of the magical or diabolical practices which were said to be joined with them. One man who lay sick in the lazaretto, confessed that he had entered into a compact with the devil, and pointed out the spot where his poisons would be found. He died in raving madness (no uncommon symptom in the disease), calling for the means of self-destruction, and attempted to cut his throat with a sharp piece of money. A woman also confessed, and named her daughter as an

accomplice: and the instruments of infection were found in the possession of the latter. It added no small credit to these stories that four men were said to have been detected in the palace at Madrid, with medicaments prepared for communicating the plague, yet they escaped, and left no trace of their flight. This news came in a letter signed by the king's own hand, addressed to the governor of the province, and warning him to be upon his guard. There is some justice in an observation made by our author, that it seemed fated through the whole of this business that things doubtful and things certain should be intermixed, and mutually involve each other in obscurity. The total disappearance of four men, detected in a crime of such moment, even in a royal palace, where of all places their apprehension would appear to be certain, bears such an air of mystification as throws discredit on the whole story: yet we cannot suppose the Spanish monarch a party to the practising of so mischievous a deceit upon his own suffering subjects; and scarcely any other person would dare, or could be interested, to get up a trick so dangerous, and apparently so unprofitable to the contrivers and actors in it. But the people, blinded by their fears, saw neither improbability nor inconsistency in these stories. Ripamonte, evidently himself a sceptic, professes that an author was not free to canvass this subject unreservedly, so obstinately was the belief fixed both in the higher and lower classes, who maintained this breath of rumour as devotedly as they clung to their homes and altars, and all that they held most sacred.

The Italians, owing perhaps to the common use of poisons among them, seem readily to have admitted such reports. When the plague broke out at Naples in 1656, it was said to have been introduced by the Spaniards, who suborned people to scatter poisoned dust in the streets. This was one of the methods which the Milanese anointers were reported to use. Tadini, one of the most eminent physicians then and there practising, who wrote an account of the plague,* says that he knew

* *Origine e Giornale successi della Gran Peste. Milan, 1648.*

two young women, who on crossing themselves with holy water on coming out of church observed that a clammy powder remained on their clothes and persons, wherever the sacred sign had been made. Returning home they were seized with giddiness, and died within two days. This seems a strong case, yet it may be doubted whether they died of the plague or of imagination, for no marks of the disease appeared on their bodies. Their mother, and those who had waited on them, perished in the same unaccountable way.

Through the whole of this trying season Cardinal Frederick Borromeo, the Archbishop of Milan, distinguished himself by an unceasing zeal in the cause of religion and charity. The ample revenues of his dignity, at all times liberally dispersed among those who needed assistance, were now devoted to the support of the lazarettos; and his private resources were increased by the zeal of the rich, who placed large sums of money at his disposal, confident that in his hands they would be most beneficially and discreetly employed. One remarkable instance of generosity is recorded. Two countrymen requested and obtained admission to the cardinal. "We are two brothers," they said, "husbandmen, whom our father left in possession of a small farm: we have brought here 2000 gold pieces, which hard labour and economy have enabled us to accumulate, and now lay them at your feet, to be disposed to such charitable uses as shall appear best to you." No less prodigal of his personal safety than of his wealth, this excellent prelate declared that he would never quit the city so long as the plague lasted; and he kept his word, notwithstanding the earnest and importunate solicitations of many who set a higher value on his life than he himself did. He visited the hospitals, the poor, gave free access to every person, however humble, who wished to see him, and directed his especial attention to requiring from the parochial clergy a strict discharge of their duties in this trying season, when the ministration of spiritual assistance to the sick and dying was esteemed more hazardous than mounting a breach or storming a battery. And it is just to observe that both the parochial and conventual

clergy displayed a noble zeal in encountering danger and labour, not only up to, but beyond the strict letter of their duty. They regulated the lazarettos and preserved such order as could be maintained in such establishments, and attended to the bodily and mental wants of their patients, hopeless of preserving their own life through the dangers to which they were exposed, and therefore undeterred by danger when 'good was to be done. On the contrary, none of the physicians would enter the hospitals. The tribunal of health and the municipal authorities requested the college of that faculty to depute some members of their body to perform that duty: it was answered, that they would send members who should go as far as the walls, keeping however outside the ditch surrounding the establishment, and there do what they could to help the sick, but that no one would consent to enter those roofs to his certain destruction. They tried in vain to bribe men to this service, and were obliged to seek physicians in France and Germany.

Ripamonte possessed a breviary which had been the cardinal's, which contained many manuscript observations made by him during the progress of the plague. They contain among several curious anecdotes the following observations on the reports prevalent concerning the anointers: "Truth and falsehood are readily intermixed, and with respect to this factitious plague many things are said of which you may readily believe a part, and as readily disprove others: and thus I admit some of those stories; others may, I think, be rejected. This I do not hesitate to affirm, that many have thought they could acquit themselves of negligence in exposing themselves to infection, by asserting that the plague which they have themselves caught, has been the work of anointers."

The practices which, whether falsely or truly, were said to exist, are these. Men begged through the city, offering poisoned papers under the appearance of petitions. The earth and its productions, eatables, money given in charity, were poisoned. The fastenings of doors, as being necessarily handled, were special objects of attack; as were also the basins of holy water placed in churches.

Poles were used to anoint what was out of reach, and bellows to scatter poisoned dust. "These and other things which were loudly proclaimed, I neither believe entirely," says the cardinal, "nor yet think them reported entirely without foundation." On the whole, without believing that these crimes were committed either at the instigation of foreign princes, or in virtue of an express compact with the devil, the cardinal seems decidedly to incline to the conclusion, that the pestilence was spread, if not originated, by artificial means; and to refer the guilt to soldiers (and the mercenaries of that day were men capable of any enormities), and other men of broken fortunes, who hoped to enrich themselves by plunder amid the general confusion, dismay, and death. Before we quit this subject, it is due to his reputation to state that he, and he alone, strongly disapproved of the procession with the body of St. Charles Borromeo, as furnishing the best opportunity to anointers, if such villains there were, and at all events of ensuring an increase of the disorder; since among such a multitude many persons were sure to bear about them the seeds of infection.

Towards the end of September the disease began to abate; and its decline was signalized by as impudent a fraud as has ever been practised, even in those earlier times when the power of the church and the blindness of the people were most remarkable. Attached to the Dominican convent there was a church of high reputation, dedicated to the Virgin, in gratitude for her signal kindness towards the city of Milan. On the night of September 22nd, the monks were collected, waiting for the matin service, when suddenly their several occupations of praying or sleeping were interrupted by the sound of the church bells. It soon appeared that they were rung miraculously, without touch of mortal fingers.* Some manifested wonder, others fear, according to their different tempers, but all were at a loss to explain the

* Ripamonte does not tell us whether any body went up into the belfry to ascertain this.

prodigy, until a voice too awful to be human was heard to say, "Mother, I will take pity upon my people." The interpretation of the miracle then was evident: the Virgin had sought and obtained from her Son the remission of the plague, and the next morning the oil which fed the lamp suspended before her image was found to possess a miraculous healing virtue, and was distributed drop by drop to all classes, who crowded, high and low, to receive it; not, we may presume, without a handsome tribute of gratitude to the protectress herself, and to her servants the Dominicans. Ripamonte, cautious of expressing a doubt concerning the anointers, breathes not a syllable from which a want of faith in this miracle can even be inferred: the church was the church of the Inquisition, and it was from the Dominican monks that the officers of that institution were chosen. The number of deaths, however, began to diminish about or somewhat earlier than this time, and grew smaller and smaller as the autumn advanced; and by the close of the year Milan was delivered from this dreadful scourge.

The number who died in these few months was registered at 140,000, but this is supposed to have been below the mark, because many persons were privately buried by their friends, to avoid introducing the Monatti into their houses.

The extravagant credulity of the Milanese, and the fury and crimes which sprung from that credulity, may be partially excused on the ground that in that age even learned men believed in the possibility of exciting pestilence by means half-medical, half-magical, and that evil spirits exercised a malign influence over the air, and interfered visibly in diffusing the evil. More than thirty years later, the Jesuit Kircher, a man of various and extensive knowledge, but of a mystic temper, and a firm believer in the power of magic and occult influences, speaks of this plague as produced by the arts of evil men. Nor does he want authorities to strengthen his belief, among whom we may mention Theophrastus, who speaks of a terrible plague, produced by poisoners in his own time, and gives the receipt for the pestiferous mixture, the in-

gredients of which are the putrid bodies of men deceased of the plague, and the bones, marrow, and poison of angry toads, approximating nearly to the receipt given by Ripamonte. To prove that demons may act as the ministers of God's wrath to scatter the seeds of pestilence, he quotes Gregory of Nyssa, a father of the church in the fourth century, who relates in his *Life of St. Gregory Thaumaturgus* (the wonder-worker), that in a city of Greece, the people being collected in the theatre were much inconvenienced for want of room and made loud complaints, on which the evil spirit was to reply that there should soon be room enough in the city. And before the audience dispersed, so fierce a pestilence broke out among them, that in brief space a populous city was changed into a desert. Here the drift of the story is evident—it was a warning against theatrical amusements, which the Christians abhorred not only as profane, but as idolatrous, and a proof of the power of the devil over those who frequented them. The Pythagorean philosophers maintained similar doctrines as to the agency of spirits. Apollonius of Tyana, being at Ephesus during a pestilence, observed a demon under the habit of a fisherman busily employed in spreading the infection. He commanded that the fisherman should be stoned, and immediately the plague ceased. Similar stories are told of Pythagoras by Iamblichus. And the monkish writers helped mainly to encourage a belief of the interference of the devil in human affairs, by the many legends in which the spiritual adversary was introduced, to his own discomfiture and to the glory of some favourite saint.

It may reasonably be hoped, almost as much from the improved sanitary regulations and increased cleanliness of our cities, as from the progress of medical science, that no future pestilence will inflict upon Europe sufferings equal to those which have been described, and which are still to follow. To enable us, however, better to appreciate the value of this hope, we may refer shortly to the condition of that science about the period of which we have been speaking. The structure of the body, and the properties of minerals, were for the most part unknown

even to the best Greek and Latin physicians ; and though anatomy had made considerable progress at the beginning of the seventeenth century, pharmacy had made little or none. The regular physicians were educated in the schools of universities, where they imbibed that profound respect for the authority of the ancients which characterized the universities of that day, and that love of exclusive privilege which has been charged upon universities in general. Brought up in the fear of Hippocrates and Galen, they received their sayings as oracular, and would probably rather have let a patient die, *secundum artem*, than have employed remedies unsanctioned by their authority. Chemistry meanwhile had made some progress, and in seeking the philosopher's stone many valuable properties of minerals had been discovered : but the discreditable character of the alchemists, and professional jealousy and prejudice, combined to render those persons, who from their knowledge and their reputation might best have availed themselves of the remedies thus presented, unwilling to profit, or to let others profit, by discoveries made in so irregular a manner. The effect of this ill-judged adherence to the wisdom of antiquity was not of course to stifle the powerful preparations employed by Paracelsus, Van Helmont, and others, but to throw them exclusively into the hands of another party. Hence arose the contending sects of Galenists and chemists, the former employing none but vegetable productions, the latter ridiculing the Galenical pharmacy as cumbrous and ineffectual, and placing their dependance on the newly-discovered properties of mercury, antimony, sulphur, and other metals and earths. It was probably very much owing to this schism that the practice of medicine was so much infested by quacks towards the close of the sixteenth and early in the seventeenth century, more so perhaps than at any other period. The real power of the remedies discarded by the most influential professors of the healing art could not be hidden, and might easily be exaggerated ; and hence arose a vast multitude of empirics, each with his elixir vitæ, or some infallible medicine or other, which vended

under a lofty name, and with the pretence of deep science, gained ready hold upon the credulity of the ignorant and the simple.

“ He is a rare physician, do him right,
An excellent Paracelsian, and has done
Strange cures with mineral physic. He deals all
With spirits—he. He will not hear a word
Of Galen, or his tedious recipes.” *

Such was the state of medicine in England at this period : of its state in Italy we are not qualified to speak ; but, from an instance presently to be quoted, it would seem to have been no more advanced than it was in England. And as there was no disease for which money could not purchase some infallible remedy, so the plague, as the object of most general apprehension, was best of all suited for the impostures of those whose treasury was the credulity of other people. A reference to any collection of tracts upon this subject, published before or during the year 1665, will satisfy the reader on this head : the examples which follow have occurred during a very cursory examination of one or two volumes, from which they might easily have been multiplied. We find in ‘ A Ioyfull Iewell, . . first made and published in the Italian tung, by the famous and learned Knight and Doctor M. Leonardo Fioraventie,’ such receipts as this : “ Of Elixir Vitæ, and how to make it, and of his great Vertues.” It consists of forty ingredients, such as ginger, juniper, sage, rose-leaves, aloes, figs, raisins, honey, &c., an equal quantity of each. This, if it did no good, could perhaps do little harm : but when it is professed that if any use it in time of pestilence, it is impossible he should be infected, the deceit becomes a source of serious evil. Another is worse, and joins blasphemy to impudence. “ A great and miraculous secret to help the pestilence, with great ease and in a short time ; a remedy and secret revealed of God miraculously. When a man hath a pestilent sore, let there be made a hole in the earth, and there let him be buried all saving the

* Alchemist, act ii. scene 3.

neck and head, and there let him stand xii or xiiii houres and he shall be holpen, and then take him forth: and mervayl not that I write this medicine, because the earth is our mother, and that which purifieth all things, as we see by experience that the earth taketh forth all spots in cloth, it susteineth and maketh flesh tender if we bury it v or vi hours in the earth." Or "the water of the sea hath a marveyulous remedy in it against the pestilence, if they wash them therein iiii or v houres together, or if need require let him stand x or xii houres therein." Truly a man would be well "holpen" by such remedies: yet this Fioraventi, a Bolognese physician and alchemist of the sixteenth century, enjoyed considerable reputation among his contemporaries. The chemists of course were not sparing in their censures of their adversaries the Galenists, and the ingenious and industrious Iatrochemist, Dr. George Thomson, makes the following observations, in which the reader may be inclined partly to join: "These, especially if they can but surreptitiously get some chymical medicines from us, will, at a hazard, try what a dry fume of gums will do, a costly pomander, a composition of figs, rue, and walnuts (a rueful medicine to trust to if all were known), Mathias' plague water, or aqua epidemica (I wonder they forgot St. Luke's water for mere credit's sake), an electuary of London treacle and wood-sorrel (I am persuaded a leg of veal and green-sauce is far better), bole-armeniack (no whit better than tobacco-clay, except that 'tis dearer and farther fetched). If these avail not, if they light upon rich families (let the poor shift for themselves), they will provide for them (taking a share with them) pearls, hyacinth-stone prepared (after their gross way), bezoar-stone of the east, unicorn's horn (equivalent to harts-horn), lignum aloes—strange they omitted gold, but that I believe they mean to put into their own pursè." * The ridicule is not undeserved, when we find such ar-

* *Loimologia*: a consolatory advice and some brief observations concerning the present art. By George Thomson, Dr. of physick, 1665.

ties as crab's eyes, julep of violets, oil of amber, confection of hyacinth, and other preparations of precious stones in the materia medica of the day. Dr. Thomson, however, has his own 'Ternion of effectual Chymical Remedies,' with which "noble chymical preparations if any desire to be accommodated in this sad time of contagion, let them repair to the place of his abode without Aldgate, nigh the Blew-Boare Inn." Spirit of salt and oil of sulphur appear to have been favourite remedies with this class of practitioners.

The greatest and last plague which has appeared in London first showed itself in Westminster towards the end of the year 1664. In December a three months' frost set in, which stopped its progress, but with the spring it returned, though doubtfully, and continued through May and June with more or less severity. At the beginning of August it set in with far greater violence, and was at its height about the beginning of September, when more than twelve thousand persons died weekly. Having reached this height, it began to decrease. By the beginning of November the city began to wear a more healthy aspect, and in December people were crowding back again as fast as they before had crowded out.* The total number of deaths is thus given :—

Within the city of London	9,887
In Westminster	8,403
Parishes without the Walls	28,888
Neighbourhood, including Hackney, Islington, Lambeth, Rotherhithe, &c., in all 12 parishes }	21,420
	<hr/> 68,598

Enough has been already said of the general appearance and course of such disorders. Instead therefore of another connected narrative, we shall only extract some

* Loimologia, or an Historical Account of the Plague in London. By Nath. Hodges, M.D.

of the most remarkable incidents and reflections to be found in Defoe's and Pepys's journals.

"The face of London was now indeed strangely altered, I mean the whole mass of buildings, city, liberties, suburbs, Westminster, Southwark, and altogether; for as to the particular part called the city, or within the walls, that was not yet much infected; but in the whole, the face of things, I say, was much altered: sorrow and sadness sat upon every face, and though some part were not overwhelmed, yet all looked deeply concerned; and as we saw it apparently coming on, so every one looked on himself and his family as in the utmost danger: were it possible to represent those times exactly to those that did not see them, and give the reader due ideas of the horror that everywhere presented itself, it must make just impressions upon their minds, and fill them with surprise. London might well be said to be all in tears; the mourners did not go about the streets indeed, for nobody put on black, or made a formal dress of mourning for their nearest friends; but the voice of mourning was truly heard in the streets; the shrieks of women and children at the windows and doors of their houses, where their nearest relations were perhaps dying, or just dead, were so frequent to be heard as we passed the streets, that it was enough to pierce the stoutest heart in the world to hear them. Tears and lamentations were seen almost in every house, especially in the first part of the visitation, for towards the latter end, men's hearts were hardened, and death was always so much before their eyes, that they did not so much concern themselves for the loss of their friends, expecting that they themselves should be summoned the next hour." *

"At the beginning of this surprising time, while the fears of the people were young, they were increased strangely by several odd accidents, which put altogether, it was really a wonder the whole body of the people did not rise as one man, and abandon their dwellings, leaving the place as a space of ground designed by Hea-

* Defoe, pp. 24, 25.

ven for an Akeldama, doomed to be destroyed from the face of the earth, and that all that would be found in it would perish with it. I shall name but a few of these things; but sure they were so many, and so many wizards and cunning people propagating them, that I have often wondered there was any (women especially) left behind.

"In the first place, a blazing star or comet appeared for several months before the plague, as there did the year after, another, a little before the fire; the old women, and the phlegmatic hypochondriacal part of the other sex, whom I could almost call old women too, remarked, especially afterwards, though not till both those judgments were over, that those two comets passed directly over the city, and that so very near the houses, that it was plain they imported something peculiar to the city alone; and the comet before the pestilence was of a faint, dull, languid colour, and its motion very heavy, solemn, and slow; but that the comet before the fire was bright and sparkling; or as others said, flaming, and its motion swift and furious, and that accordingly one foretold a heavy judgment, slow but severe, terrible and frightful, as was the plague. But the other foretold a stroke, sudden, swift, and fiery, as was the conflagration; nay, so particular some people were, that as they looked upon that comet preceding the fire, they fancied that they not only saw it pass swiftly and fiercely, and could perceive the motion with their eye, but even they heard it, that it made a rushing mighty noise, fierce and terrible, though at a distance, and but just perceivable.

"I saw both these stars, and I must confess, had had so much of the common notion of such things in my head, that I was apt to look upon them as the forerunners and warnings of God's judgments, and especially, when the plague had followed the first, I yet saw another of the like kind, I could not but say, God had not yet sufficiently scourged the city.

"The apprehensions of the people were likewise strangely increased by the error of the times, in which I think the people, from what principle I cannot imagine, were more addicted to prophecies and astro-



[Medal in commemoration of the plague and fire of London. It represents the eye of God in the centre, and the two comets, one on each side; that on the right showering down pestilence upon the city. On the other side the city is represented on fire, while a violent east wind is urging the flames. The foreground is full of images of distress: a ship tossed by the waves; a man drowning; a withered tree: Death fighting with a man on horseback. The reverse of this curious piece, the history of which, when and by whom it was struck, is, we believe, unknown, is given in p. 230. Legend: "So he punishes."]

logical conjurations, dreams, and old wives' tales, than ever they were before or since. Whether this unhappy temper was originally raised by the follies of some people who got money by it, that is to say, by printing predictions and prognostications, I know not: but certain it is, books frightened them terribly, such as Lilly's Almanac, Gadbury's Astrological Predictions, Poor Robin's Almanac, and the like; also several pretended religious books, one entitled, 'Come out of her, my people, lest ye be partaker of her Plagues;' another called, 'Fair Warning;' another, 'Britain's Remembrancer,' and many such; all or most part of which foretold, directly or covertly, the ruin of the city. Nay, some were so enthusiastically bold as to run

about the streets with their oral predictions, pretending they were sent to preach to the city; and one in particular, who, like Jonah to Nineveh, cried in the streets, 'Yet forty days, and London shall be destroyed.' I will not be positive whether he said 'yet forty days,' or 'yet a few days.'* Another ran about naked, except a pair of drawers about his waist, crying day and night, like a man that Josephus mentions, who cried, 'Woe to Jerusalem!' a little before the destruction of that city. So this poor naked creature cried, 'O! the great and the dreadful God!' and said no more, but repeated those words continually, with a voice and countenance full of horror, a swift pace, and nobody could ever find him to stop, or rest, or take any sustenance, at least that I could hear of. I met this poor creature several times in the streets, and would have spoken to him, but he would not enter into speech with me, or any one else, but kept on his dismal cries continually. These things terrified the people to the last degree; and especially when two or three times, as I have mentioned already, they found one or two in the bills dead of the plague at St. Giles's."†

PPRS. June 7.—"The hottest day that ever I felt in my life. This day, much against my will, I did see in Drury-lane two or three houses marked with a red cross upon the doors, and 'Lord have mercy upon us' writ there, which was a sad sight to me, being the first of that kind that to my remembrance I ever saw."

June 17.—"It struck me very deep this afternoon, going with a hackney-coach down Holborn, from the

* This is a remarkable instance of that air of minute attention to fidelity which gives such a remarkable air of reality even to those works of Defoe which are altogether fictitious. Though aware that the history of the plague is not to be taken as the record of his own adventures during it, it is hardly possible not to believe that he had been a hearer of the denunciation, which he is so careful not to report inaccurately.

† Defoe, pp. 28-32.

Lord Treasurer's: the coachman I found to drive easily and easily, at last stood still, and came down hardly able to stand, and told me he was suddenly struck very sick, and almost blind, he could not see: so I light, and went into another coach with a sad heart for the poor man, and for myself also, lest he should have been struck with the plague."

DEFOE. "I went all the first part of the time freely about the streets, though not so freely as to run myself into apparent danger, except when they dug the great pit in the churchyard of our parish of Aldgate. A terrible pit it was, and I could not resist my curiosity to go and see it; as near as I may judge, it was about forty feet in length, and about fifteen or sixteen feet broad; and at the time I first looked at it, about nine feet deep: but it was said they dug it near twenty feet deep afterwards, in one part of it, till they could go no deeper for the water; for they had, it seems, dug several large pits before this; for though the plague was long a coming to our parish, yet when it did come, there was no parish in or about London where it raged with such violence as in the parishes of Aldgate and Whitechapel.

"It was about the 10th of September that my curiosity led, or rather drove me to go and see this pit again, when there had been near four hundred people buried in it; and I was not content to see it in the day time, as I had done before, for then there would have been nothing to have seen but the loose earth; for all the bodies that were thrown in were immediately covered with earth by those they called the barriers, which at other times were called bearers; but I resolved to go in the night, and see some of them thrown in. There was a strict order to prevent people coming to those pits, and that was only to prevent infection; but after some time that order was more necessary, for people that were infected, and near their end, and delirious also, would run to those pits wrapt in blankets, or rugs, and throw themselves in, and, as they said, bury themselves. I got admittance into the churchyard by being acquainted with the sexton who at-

tended, who, though he did not refuse me at all, yet earnestly persuaded me not to go; telling me very seriously, for he was a good religious and sensible man, that it was indeed their business and duty to venture and to run all hazards, and that in it they might hope to be preserved; but that I had no apparent call to it but my own curiosity, which, he said, he believed I would not pretend was sufficient to justify my running that hazard. I told him I had been pressed in my mind to go, and that perhaps it might be an instructing sight, and one that would not be without its uses. 'Nay,' said the good man, 'if you will venture upon that score, in name of God go in, for, depend upon it, it will be a sermon to you; it may be the best you ever heard in your life. It is a speaking sight,' said he, 'and has a voice with it, and a loud one, to call us all to repentance;' and with that he opened the door, and said, 'Go if you will.'

"His discourse had shocked my resolution a little, and I stood wavering for a good while; but just at that interval I saw two links come over from the end of the Minories, and heard the bellman, and then appeared a dead-cart, as they called it, coming over the streets, so I could no longer resist my desire of seeing it, and went in. . . . It had in it sixteen or seventeen bodies; some were wrapt up in linen sheets, some in rugs, some little other than naked, or so loose that what covering they had fell from them in the shooting out of the cart, and they fell quite naked amongst the rest; but the matter was not much to them, nor the indecency to any one else, seeing they were all dead, and were to be huddled together into the common grave of mankind, as we may call it, for here was no difference made, but poor and rich went together; there was no other way of burials, neither was it possible there should, for coffins were not to be had for the prodigious numbers that fell in such a calamity as this.

"It was reported, by way of scandal upon the buriers, that if any corpse was delivered to them, decently wound up, as we called it then, in a winding sheet, tied over

the head and feet, which some did, and which was generally of good linen—I say it was reported that the buriers were so wicked as to strip them in the cart, and carry them quite naked to the ground ; but as I cannot credit any thing so vile among Christians, and at a time so filled with terrors as that was, I can only relate it, and leave it undetermined.

“ Innumerable stories also went about of the cruel behaviour and practice of nurses who attended the sick, and of their hastening on the fate of those they attended in their sickness*. . . . It is to be observed, that the women were in all this calamity the most rash, fearless, and desperate creatures ; and as there were vast numbers that went about as nurses to tend those that were sick, they committed a great many petty thieveries in the houses where they were employed, and some of them were publicly whipped for it, when perhaps they ought rather to have been hanged for examples, for numbers of houses were robbed on these occasions ; till at length the parish officers were sent to recommend nurses to the sick, and always took an account of who it was they sent, so as that they might call them to account, if the house had been abused where they were placed. But these robberies extended chiefly to wearing clothes, linen, and what rings or money they could come at, when the person died who was under their care, but not to a general plunder of the houses ; and I could give you an account of one of these nurses, who, several years after, being on her death-bed, confessed with the utmost horror the robberies she had committed at the time of her being a nurse, and by which she had enriched herself to a great degree ; but as for murders, I do not find that there ever was any proof of the facts, in the manner as it has been reported, except as above. They did tell me indeed of a nurse in one place that laid a wet cloth on the face of a dying patient whom she tended, and so put an end to his life, who was just expiring

* Pp. 78, 85.

before; and another that smothered a young woman she was looking to when she was in a fainting fit, and would have come to herself; some that killed them by giving them one thing, some another, and some starved them by giving them nothing at all. But these stories had two marks of suspicion that always attended them, which caused me always to slight them, and to look upon them as mere stories that people continually frightened each other with. That, wherever it was that we heard it, they always placed the scene at the further end of the town opposite or most remote from where you were to hear it. In the next place, of whatsoever part you heard the story, the particulars were always the same, especially that of laying a wet double clout on a dying man's face, and that of smothering a young gentlewoman, so that it was apparent, at least to my judgment, that there was more of tale than of truth in these things."*

"I had some little obligations upon me to go to my brother's house, which was in Coleman-street parish, and which he had left to my care, and I went at first every day, but afterwards only once or twice a week.

"In these walks I had many dismal scenes before my eyes; as particularly of persons falling dead in the streets, terrible shrieks and screechings of women, who in their agonies would throw open their chamber windows, and cry out in a dismal surprising manner. It is impossible to describe the variety of postures in which the passions of the poor people would express themselves.

"Passing through Tokenhouse-yard, in Lothbury, of a sudden a casement violently opened just over my head, and a woman gave three frightful screeches, and then cried, 'Oh! death, death, death!' in a most inimitable tone, and which struck me with horror and a chillness in my very blood. There was nobody to be seen in the whole street, neither did any other window open, for people had no curiosity now in any case; nor could any body help one another; so I went on to pass into Bell-alley.

* Pp. 110, 112.

Just in Bell-alley, on the right hand of the passage, there was a more terrible cry than that, though it was not so directed out at the window, but the whole family was in a terrible fright, and I could hear women and children run screaming about the rooms like distracted, when a garret-window opened, and somebody from a window the other side the alley called and asked, 'What is the matter.' Upon which, from the first window it was answered, 'O Lord! my old master has hanged himself.' The other asked again, 'Is he quite dead?' and the first answered, 'Ay, ay, dead and cold.' This person was a merchant and a deputy-alderman, and very rich. I care not to mention his name, though I knew his name too, but that would be a hardship to the family, which is now flourishing again.

"But this is but one. It is scarce credible what dreadful cases happened in particular families every day: people in the rage of the distemper, or in the torment of their swellings, which was indeed intolerable, running out of their own government, raving and distracted, and oftentimes laying violent hands upon themselves, throwing themselves out at their windows, shooting themselves, &c.; mothers murdering their own children in their lunacy; some dying of mere grief, as a passion; some of mere fright and surprise, without any infection at all; others frightened into idiotism and foolish distractions; some into despair and lunacy; others into melancholy madness.

"The pain of the swelling was in particular very violent, and to some intolerable; the physicians and surgeons may be said to have tortured many poor creatures, even to death. The swellings in some grew hard, and they applied violent drawing plasters or poultices to break them; and if these did not do, they cut and scarified them in a terrible manner. In some those swellings were made hard, partly by the force of the distemper, and partly by their being too violently drawn, and were so hard that no instrument could cut them; and then they burnt them with caustics, so that many died raving mad with the torment, and some in the

very operation. In these distresses, some 'for want of help to hold them down in their beds, or to look to them, laid hands upon themselves as above; some broke out into the streets, perhaps naked, and would run directly down to the river, if they were not stopped by the watchmen or other officers, and plunge themselves into the water, wherever they found it."*

"One of the worst days we had in the whole time, as I thought, was in the beginning of September, when indeed good people were beginning to think that God was resolved to make a full end of the people in this miserable city. This was at that time when the plague was fully come into the eastern parishes. The parish of Aldgate, if I may give my opinion, buried above 1000 a week for two weeks, though the bills did not say so many; but it surrounded me at so dismal a rate, that there was not a house in twenty uninfected. In the Minories, in Houndsditch, and in those parts of Aldgate parish about the Butcher-row, and the alleys over against me, I say in those places death reigned in every corner. Whitechapel parish was in same condition, and though much less than the parish I lived in, yet buried near 600 a week, by the bills; and in my opinion near twice as many. Whole families, and indeed whole streets of families, were swept away together, insomuch as it was frequent for neighbours to call to the bell-man to go to such and such houses and fetch out the people, for that they were all dead.

"And indeed the work of removing the dead bodies by carts was now grown so very odious and dangerous, that it was complained of that the bearers did not take care to clear such houses, where all the inhabitants were dead, but that some of the bodies lay unburied, till the neighbouring families were offended with the stench, and consequently infected. And this neglect of the officers was such, that the churchwardens and constables were summoned to look after it, and even the justices of the Hamlets were obliged to venture their lives among them to quicken and encourage them; for innumerable of the

* Pp. 105, 108.

bearers died of the distemper, infected by the bodies they were obliged to come so near; and had it had not been that the number of people who wanted employment, and wanted bread, as I have said before, was so great that necessity drove them to undertake any thing, and venture any thing, they would never have found people to be employed, and then the bodies of the dead would have lain above ground, and have perished and rotted in a dreadful manner.

“But the magistrates cannot be enough commended in this, that they kept such good order for the burying of the dead, that as fast as any of those they employed to carry off or bury the dead fell sick and died, as was many times the case, they immediately supplied the places with others, which, by reason of the great number of poor that was left out of business, was not hard to do. This occasioned that notwithstanding the infinite number of people which died, and were sick, almost all together, yet they were always cleared away and carried off every night, so that it was never to be said of London that the living were not able to bury the dead.

“As the desolation was greater during those terrible times, so the amazement of the people increased, and a thousand unaccountable things they would do in the violence of their fright, as others did the same in the agonies of their distemper, and this part was very affecting: some went roaring and crying, and wringing of their hands along the streets; some would go praying, and lifting up their hands to heaven, calling upon God for mercy. I cannot say, indeed, whether this was not in their distraction; but be it so, it was still an indication of a more serious mind, when they had the use of their senses, and was much better, even as it was, than the frightful yellings and cryings that every day, and especially in the evenings, were heard in some streets. I suppose the world has heard of the famous Solomon Eagle, an enthusiast: he, though not infected at all but in his head, went about denouncing of judgment upon the city in a frightful manner, sometimes quite naked, and with a pan of burning charcoal

on his head, What he said, or pretended indeed, I could not learn.



[Reverse of the medal given in p. 221. Here every thing is prosperous: a corn-field on the one side, a vineyard on the other; in front are ships riding in quiet, and the withered tree has put forth leaves. The figure in front, by the serpent about his arm, seems meant for St. Paul. Legend: 'Mere goodness.']

"I will not say whether that clergyman was distracted or not, or whether he did it out of pure zeal for the poor people, who went every evening through the streets of Whitechapel, and with his hands lifted up, repeated that part of the liturgy of the church continually, 'Spare us, good Lord; spare thy people whom thou hast redeemed with thy most precious blood.' I say I cannot speak positively of these things, because these were only the dismal objects which represented themselves to me as I looked through my chamber windows, for I seldom opened the casements, while I confined myself within doors during that most violent raging of the pestilence; when indeed many began to think, and even to say, that there would none escape; and indeed I began to think so too, and therefore kept within doors for about a fortnight, and never stirred out. But I could not hold it. Besides there were some people who, notwithstanding the danger, did not omit

publicly to attend the worship of God, even in the most dangerous times. And though it is true that a great many of the clergy did shut up their churches and fled, as other people did, for the safety of their lives, yet all did not do so; some ventured to officiate, and to keep up the assemblies of the people by constant prayers, and some times sermons, or brief exhortations to repentance and reformation, and this as long as they would hear them. And dissenters did the like also, and even in the very churches, where the parish ministers were either dead or fled; nor was there any room for making any difference at such a time as this was.*

PEPYS, Sept. 3.—Lord's day.—“Up and put on my silk coloured suit, very fine, and my periwig, bought a good while since, but durst not wear, because the plague was in Westminster when I bought it; and it is a wonder what will be the fashion after the plague is done as to periwigs, for nobody will dare to buy any hair for fear of the infection, that it had been cut off the heads of people dead of the plague.”

It would be a great shame to laugh at Mr. Pepys after he has done so much to amuse the world: but these, and such as these, are the most curious and important particulars concerning the pestilence recorded in his minute and extensive diary.

* Pp. 131, 135.

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HISTORICAL PARALLELS.

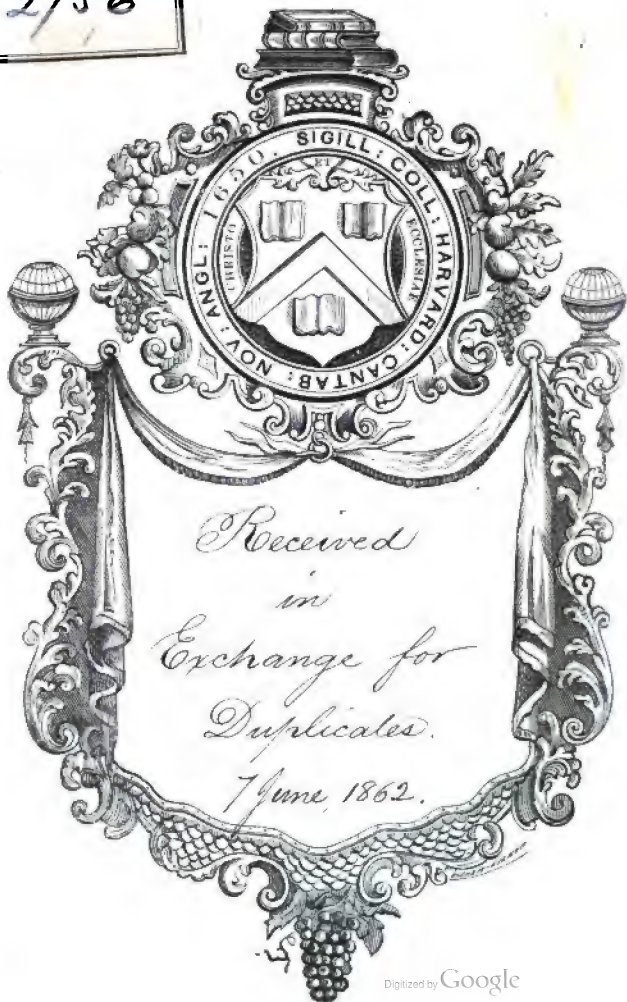
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The medals have been engraved from the originals in the
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HISTORICAL PARALLELS.

CHAPTER XIII.



Medal struck after the siege of Ostend.

Siege of Plataea — Numantia — Tyre — Syracuse — Lines of circumvallation — Siege of Jerusalem — Of La Réole — Effects of the invention of Gunpowder — Siege of Ostend — Magdeburg — Character of the mercenary troops of the seventeenth century — Siege of Zaragoza.

THE cautious policy of Pericles, and the plague, combined to render the two first years of the war barren of incidents. The third campaign opened more energetically with the siege of Plataea, the old and faithful ally

of Athens. This is the earliest siege of which we have any full and particular account ; and some surprise may be felt at the rudeness and inefficacy of the means employed in prosecuting it by the most military nation of Greece. For this, however, all previous history prepares us. To the early Greeks fortifications of any strength appear to have presented insuperable obstacles. Not a city of any note can be mentioned which was taken by fair fighting. Troy was impregnable by force. Eira was taken in consequence of its being accidentally left unguarded.* Ithome held out for ten years, and at last obtained honourable terms of surrender. And when Cyrus marched against Babylon, the inhabitants, trusting in their walls and their magazines, "made no account at all of being besieged ; but Cyrus became greatly puzzled what to do, having spent much time there and made no progress at all."† The stratagem by which he took it at last is well known : he laid dry the bed of the Euphrates, and introduced a body of troops through the deserted channel ; yet danger, even from this quarter, had been foreseen and guarded against, if proper caution had been used. Each side of the river was lined with walls, and gates were placed at the end of the streets which led down to the water side ; so that, as Herodotus himself remarks, if the Persians had been on their guard the attempt might have been defeated by merely closing the gates, and the assailants might have been cut off entirely by missile weapons. But, to return to Plataea ; the Spartans were notoriously unskilled, even among the Greeks, in this branch of warfare. Military engines they had none ; a want arising probably from their national poverty ; for the ram was known, and was employed, some say invented, by Pericles, at the siege of Samos, some years before the Peloponnesian war broke out. It is remarkable that from this time downwards to the invention of gunpowder, no material discovery was made in this branch of the military art, except the introduction of moving towers. Lines of circumvallation, as

* Vol. i. p. 51.

† Herod. i. 190.

they were the earliest, continued to be the surest means of overcoming the pertinacious resistance of stone and mortar. Such was the case even at Rome, after the vast influx of wealth from conquered provinces had facilitated the construction of the largest and most expensive machines; and the vast scale upon which those temporary enclosures were completed, exhibits most strikingly the laboriousness of the Roman legionaries. This, however, is foreign to our present subject. If the reader has any curiosity respecting these works, he will find some remarkable ones described in Cæsar's Commentaries.*

Just before war broke out between Athens and Sparta, the Thebans, always jealous of Athens, and more especially envious of its strict connection with Platæa, over which, as the head of the Bœotian confederacy, they claimed the same undefined but oppressive authority which was exercised by the Athenians and other leading cities over their allies, made an attempt to gain possession of Platæa, in concert with a party within its walls, consisting of citizens dissatisfied with the existing government. By the contrivance of the latter, a body of Theban troops was introduced by night, who without a struggle became, to all appearance, masters of the town, piled their arms in the market-place, and invited the inhabitants to place themselves under the protection of Thebes. But the Athenian party was greatly preponderant, and discovering the small number of their enemies they took courage and assaulted them. Almost all the Thebans were made prisoners, and subsequently put to death, in contravention of a promise of personal security implied, if not absolutely expressed in words. Immediate notice of what had occurred was sent to the Athenians, who, considering this as the commencement of war, removed the women and children, and all who

* See the siege of Alesia, vii. 72, or the circumvallation of Pompey at Dyrrachium, by Cæsar's army, Bell. Civ. iii. 42. The lines of Torres Vedras, drawn by the British in the Peninsular war, may however compete, for their extent and the labour bestowed on them, with any of these ancient works.

were unfit for military duty, from Platæa, sending thither eighty of their own citizens to increase the garrison, and also probably to guard against any further attempts on the part of the disaffected.

No disturbance was given to Platæa during the two first years of the war. At the commencement of the third, Archidamus, the Spartan king and general, finding that the annual devastation of Attica was of no service to the Peloponnesian confederacy, and unwilling perhaps to incur the hazard of entering an infected country, marched to Platæa, which, in consequence of its exertions in the Persian war, had been invested by the general consent of Greece with privileges of an almost sacred character. The nature of these privileges, and the singular proposal to which they gave rise, will be best understood from the narration of Thucydides.

“The next summer the Peloponnesians and their confederates came not into Attica, but turned their arms against Platæa, led by Archidamus, the son of Zeuxidamus, king of the Lacedæmonians, who, having pitched his camp, was about to waste the territory thereof. But the Platæans sent ambassadors presently unto him, with words to this effect:—‘Archidamus, and you Lacedæmonians, you do neither justly, nor worthy yourselves and ancestors, in making war upon Platæa. For Pausanias of Lacedæmon, the son of Cleombrotus, having (together with such Grecians as were content to undergo the danger of the battle that was fought in this our territory) delivered all Greece from the slavery of the Persians, when he offered sacrifice in the market-place of Platæa to Jupiter the deliverer, called together all the confederates, and granted to the Platæans this privilege: that their city and territory should be free; that none should make unjust war against them, nor go about to enslave them; and if any did, the confederates then present should use their utmost ability to revenge their quarrel.* These privileges your fathers granted us for

* After the battle of Platæa, the Athenians and Lacedæmonians contending for the *aristeia*, or prize for having be-

our valour and zeal in those dangers. But now do you the clean contrary, for you join with our greatest enemies, the Thebans, to bring us into subjection. Therefore calling to witness the gods then sworn by, and the gods peculiar to your ancestral descent, and our own local gods, we require you, that you do no damage to the territory of Platæa, nor violate those oaths; but that you suffer us to enjoy our liberty in such sort as was allowed us by Pausanias.*

"The Platæans having thus said, Archidamus replied, and said thus:—'Men of Platæa, if you would do as ye say, you say what is just. For as Pausanias hath granted to you, so also be you free; and help to set free the rest, who having been partakers of the same dangers then, and being comprised in the same oath with yourselves, are now brought into subjection by the Athenians. And this so great preparation and war is only for the

haved best in the battle, that honour, by the mediation of the Corinthians, was conferred on the Platæans, whose signal zeal throughout the Persian war was admitted, on all hands, to deserve such a distinction. At the same time a yearly sacrifice was appointed to be held at Platæa in honour of the slain; and a sort of sacred character was conferred both on the Platæans and their territory, with the privileges here enumerated.

* Dr. Arnold observes that this is a good instance of that feature of Greek polytheism by which the gods were known and honoured as standing in particular relations to mankind, not as the general moral governors of the world. Three classes of gods were here invoked, each as having a special point of honour involved in the observation of the oaths here mentioned: those whose names were pledged to the observance of it, and who would be personally affronted by its violation; the ancestral gods (*θεοὶ πατρώοι*) of the Lacedæmonians, who would take it ill that the act of their descendant, Pausanias, should be disregarded, or the tombs of the Lacedæmonians at Platæa neglected or profaned; and the local gods (*θεοὶ ἐγχώριοι*), to whom the territory was as a home, and who must expect to be denied their worship, if their country should be occupied by strangers, who would bring their own gods along with them.

deliverance of them and others: of which if you will especially participate, keep your oaths; at least (as we have also advised you formerly) be quiet, and enjoy your own, in neutrality, receiving both sides in the way of friendship, neither side in the way of faction. And these things will content us.' Thus said Archidamus. And the ambassadors of Plataea, when they heard him, returned to the city; and having communicated his answer to the people, brought word again to Archidamus, 'That what he had advised was impossible for them to perform, without leave of the Athenians, in whose keeping were their wives and children; and that they feared also for the whole city, lest when the Lacedæmonians were gone the Athenians should come and take the custody of it out of their hands; or that the Thebans, as being comprehended in the oath that they would admit both parties, should again attempt to surprise it.' But Archidamus, to encourage them, made this answer: 'Deliver you unto us Lacedæmonians your city and your houses; show us the bounds of your territory; give us your trees by tale, and whatsoever else can be numbered; and depart yourselves, whither you shall think good, as long as the war lasteth. And when it shall be ended we will deliver it all unto you again: in the mean time we will keep these things as deposited, and will cultivate your ground, and pay you rent for it, as much as shall suffice for your maintenance.'

"Hereupon the ambassadors went again into the city, and having consulted with the people, made answer: 'That they would first acquaint the Athenians with it, and if they would consent they would then accept the condition; till then they desired a suspension of arms, and not to have their territory wasted.' Upon this he granted them so many days' truce as was requisite for their return, and for so long forbore to waste their territory. When the Plataean ambassadors were arrived at Athens, and had advised on the matter with the Athenians, they returned to the city with this answer: 'The Athenians say, that neither in former times, since we were their confederates, did they ever abandon us to the

injury of any, nor will they now neglect us, but give us their utmost assistance; and they conjure us, by the oath of our fathers, not to make any alienation touching the league.'

"When the ambassadors had made this report, the Platæans resolved in their councils not to betray the Athenians, but rather to endure, if it must be, the wasting of their territory before their eyes, and to suffer whatsoever misery could befall them; and no more to go forth, but from the walls to make them this answer: 'That it was impossible for them to do as the Lacedæmonians had required.' When they had answered so, Archidamus the king first made a protestation to the gods and heroes of the country, saying thus: 'All ye gods and heroes, protectors of the land of Platæa, be witnesses that we neither invade this territory, wherein our fathers, after their vows unto you, overcame the Medes, and which you made propitious for the Grecians to fight in, unjustly now in the beginning, because they have first broken the league they had sworn; nor what we shall further do will be any injury, because though we have offered many and reasonable conditions, they have yet been all refused. Assent ye also to the punishment of the beginners of injury, and to the revenge of those that bear lawful arms.'

"Having made this protestation to the gods, he made ready his army for the war. And first having felled trees, he therewith made a palisado about the town that none might go out. That done, they raised a mound against the wall, hoping, with so great an army all at work at once, to have quickly taken it. And, having cut down timber in the mountain Cithæron, they built a frame of timber and wattled it about on either side, to serve instead of a wall, to keep the earth from falling too much away, and cast into it stones and earth, and whatsoever else would serve to fill it up. Seventy days and nights continually they cast up the mound, dividing the work between them for rest in such manner, as some might be carrying, whilst others took their sleep and food. And they were urged to labour by the Lace-

daemonian officers, who commanded severally the contingents of the allied cities. The Platæans seeing the mound to rise, made the frame of a wall with wood, which, having placed on the wall of the city in the place where the mound touched, they built it within full of bricks, taken from the adjoining houses, for that purpose demolished; the timbers serving to bind them together, that the building might not be weakened by the height. The same was also covered with skins and leather, both to keep the timber from shot of wildfire and those that wrought from danger. So that the height of the wall was great on one side, and the mound went up as fast on the other. The Platæans used also this device; they brake a hole in their own wall, where the mound joined, and drew the earth from it into the city. But the Peloponnesians, when they found it out, rammed clay into cases made of reeds, which they cast into the cavity, with intention that the mound should not moulder, and be carried away like loose earth. The Platæans, excluded here, gave over that plot, and digging a secret mine, which they carried under the mound from within the city by conjecture, fetched away the earth again, and were a long time undiscovered; so that the earth being continually carried out below, it was no use to cast fresh stuff on the mound, which still settled down into the excavation. Nevertheless, fearing that they should not be able even thus to hold out, being few against many, they devised this further; they gave over working at the high wall against the mound, and beginning at both ends of it, where the wall was low, built another wall in form of a crescent, inward to the city, that, if the great wall were taken, this might resist, and put the enemy to make another mound, in the continuing of which further inwards they should have their labour over again, and withal should be more exposed on either side to missile weapons. And at the same time that they were raising the mound, the Peloponnesians brought to the city their engines of battery; one of which, by help of the mound, they applied to the high wall, wherewith they much shook it, and put the Platæans into great fear; and others to other

parts of the wall, which the Platæans broke partly by casting ropes about them, and partly with great beams, which being hung in long iron chains by either end upon two other great beams jetting over, and inclining from above the wall like to horns, they drew up to them in a horizontal position, and when the engine was about to make a blow any where, they let go the chains and let the beam fall, which, by the violence of its descent, broke off the head of the battering-ram.

“After this, the Peloponnesians, seeing their engines availed not, and thinking it hard to take the city by any present violence, prepared themselves to draw an enclosure all around it. But first they thought fit to attempt it by fire, being no great city, and when the wind should rise, if they could, to burn it; for there was no way they did not think on, to have gained it without expense and long siege. Having therefore brought faggots, they cast them from the mound into the space between it and their new wall, which by so many hands was quickly filled; and then into as much of the rest of the city as at that distance they could reach; and throwing amongst them fire, together with brimstone and pitch, kindled the wood, and raised such a flame, as the like was never seen before, made by the hand of man. For it has been known that a forest in the mountains has taken fire* spontaneously from the friction of its boughs in a high wind, and burst into flames. But this fire was a great one, and the Platæans, that had escaped other mischiefs, wanted little of being consumed by this; for there was a large part of the town within which it was impossible to approach; and if the wind had blown the fire that way (as the enemy hoped it might) they could never have escaped. It is also reported that there fell much rain then, with great thunder, and that the flame was extinguished and the danger ceased by that.

“Now the Peloponnesians, when they failed likewise of this, retaining a part of their army, and dismissing

* Such a *natural* fire, therefore, may have been still greater.

the rest, enclosed the city about with a wall, dividing the circumference thereof to the charge of the several cities. There was a ditch both within and without it, out of which they made their bricks; and after it was finished, which was about the rising of Arcturus,* they left a guard for one-half of the wall (for the other was guarded by the Bœotians), and departed with the rest of their army, and were dissolved according to their cities. The Plataeans had before this sent their wives and children and all their unserviceable men to Athens. The rest were besieged, being in number of the Plataeans themselves four hundred, of Athenians eighty, and one hundred and ten women to dress their meat. These were all when the siege was first laid, and not more, neither free nor bond, in the city. In this manner were the Plataeans besieged.”†

The blockade continued for about a year and a half, during which the historian does not advert to it. At the end of that time, in the winter, B. C. 428-7, the garrison, after deliberation, being pressed by hunger and despairing of any help from Athens, resolved to abandon the city, and force a passage through the line of circumvallation. Half the number took alarm at the seeming rashness of the attempt, and declined to share it; but about two hundred and twenty persisted in their resolution. We now return to the historian's narrative:—

“As for the wall of the Peloponnesians, it was thus built; it consisted of a double circle, one towards Plataea, and another outward, in case of an assault from Athens. These two walls were distant one from the other about sixteen feet; and that sixteen feet of space between them was disposed and built into cabins for the force that kept the works, which were so joined and continued one to another, that the whole appeared to be one thick wall, with battlements on either side. At every ten

* That is, when the star begins to rise before the sun, and so first becomes visible in the morning. This in the case of Arcturus occurred about the middle of September.

† Thucyd. ii. 71, 78.

battlements stood a great tower of the same breadth as the walls, and stretching across them from the inner to the outer face, so that there was no passage by the side of a tower, but through the midst of it. And such nights as there happened any storm of rain, they used to quit the battlements of the wall, and to watch under the towers, as being not far asunder, and covered beside overhead. Such was the form of the wall wherein the Peloponnesians kept their watch.

“The Platæans, after they were ready, waiting for a tempestuous night of wind and rain, and withal moonless, went out of the city, and were conducted by those men who had proposed the attempt. And first they passed the ditch that was about the town, and then came up close to the wall of the enemy, who through the darkness could not see them coming, nor hear them for the clatter of the storm, which drowned the noise of their approach. And they came on besides at a good distance one from the other, that they might not be betrayed by the clashing of their arms; and were but lightly armed, and not shod but on the left foot, for the more steadiness in the mud. They came thus to the battlements in one of the spaces between tower and tower, knowing that there was now no watch kept there. And first came they that carried the ladders, and placed them to the wall; then twelve lightly armed, only with a dagger and a breast-plate, went up, led by Ammeas, the son of Coræbus, who was the first that mounted; and after him ascended his followers, to each tower six. To these succeeded others lightly armed, that carried the darts, for whom they that came after carried targets at their backs, that they might be the more expedite to get up, which targets they were to deliver to them when they came to the enemy. At length, when most of them were ascended, they were heard by the watchmen that were in the towers; for one of the Platæans, taking hold of the battlements, threw down a tile, which made a noise in the fall, and presently there was an alarm, and the army ran to the wall, for in the dark and stormy night they knew not what the danger was. And the Platæans

that were left in the city came forth withal, and assaulted the wall of the Peloponnesians on the opposite part to that where their men went over ; so that they were all in a tumult in their several places, and not any of them that watched durst stir to the aid of the rest, nor were able to conjecture what had happened. But those three hundred* that were appointed to assist the watch upon all occasions of need, went without the wall, and made towards the place of the clamour. They also held up the fires by which they used to make known the approach of enemies, towards Thebes. But then the Plateans likewise held out many other fires from the wall of the city, which for that purpose they had before prepared, to confound the meaning of the enemy's signal-fires, and that the Thebans, apprehending the matter otherwise than it was, might forbear to send help till their men were over, and had recovered some place of safety.

“In the mean time those Plateans, which having scaled the wall first and slain the watch, were now masters of both the towers, not only guarded the passages by standing themselves in the entries, but also applying ladders from the wall to the towers; and conveying many men to the top, kept the enemies off with shot both from above and below. In the mean space the greatest number of them having reared to the wall many ladders at once, and beaten down the battlements, passed quite over between the towers, and ever as any of them got to the other side, they stood still upon the brink of the ditch, and with arrows and darts kept off those that came along the wall to hinder the passage of their companions. And when the rest were over, then last of all, and with much ado, came they also which were in the two towers down to the ditch. And by this time the three hundred, that were to assist the watch, came and set upon them, and had lights with them ; by which

* There is no mention of these three hundred where the author relateth the laying of siege ; but it must be understood.

means the Platæans that were on the further brink of the ditch discerned them the better from out of the dark, and aimed their arrows and darts at their most disarmed parts; for, standing in the dark, the light of the enemy made the Platæans the less discernible: inso-much as the last of them passed the ditch in time, though with difficulty and force; for the water in it was frozen over, though not so hard as to bear, but watery, and such as when the wind is at east rather than at north; and the snow which fell that night, together with so great a wind as there was, had very much increased the water, which they waded through, with scarce their heads above. But yet the greatness of the storm was the principal means of their escape.

“From the ditch the Platæans in troop took the way towards Thebes, leaving on the right hand the shrine of the hero Androcrates, both for that they supposed it would be least suspected that they had taken the road leading to their enemies; and also because they saw the Peloponnesians with their lights pursue that way, which, by Mount Cithæron and the Oakheads, led to Athens; and for six or seven furlongs the Platæans followed the road to Thebes; then turning off they took that towards the mountain leading to Erythræ and Hysie, and, having gotten the hills, escaped through to Athens, being two hundred and twelve persons out of a greater number: for some of them returned into the city before the rest went over, and one of their archers was taken upon the ditch without. And so the Peloponnesians gave over the pursuit, and returned to their places. But the Platæans that were within the city knowing nothing of the event, and those that turned back having told them that not a man escaped, as soon as it was day sent a herald to entreat a truce for the taking up of their dead bodies; but when they knew the truth, they gave it over. And thus these men of Platæa passed through the fortification of their enemies, and were saved.”*

A bolder and more fortunate stroke for life and liberty

* Thucyd. iii. 21—24.

has never been described. How deep must have been the mortification of those whose courage failed at the decisive moment, upon learning the brilliant success of their comrades' attempt! Dearly did they pay for disgracing their brave resistance by a single moment of timidity. Forced at last by famine to yield up the town, which the besiegers could at any time have taken by assault, but that they had an ulterior object in wishing to obtain it by surrender, the only terms they could obtain were, that they should surrender themselves and their city to the justice of Sparta, so that none but the guilty should be punished. Commissioners were sent out to try them. The only question asked was this: Had they done any service to the Lacedæmonians or their allies in the present war? The Platæans requested that instead of merely answering this question they might reply at length; and having obtained it, commissioned two persons to plead their cause. They set forth the peculiarly hard situation in which this mode of trial, if such it could be called, placed them; which, setting aside the justice of their cause, required them to pronounce their own certain condemnation. They reminded the hearers of their services in the Persian war, of the privileges and immunities conferred on them by Pausanias and the Greeks, and the respect due to their territory, as the repository of the bones of those who fell in the great battle which for ever relieved Greece from the fear of Persia. They urged, that when they had sought alliance with Sparta, and protection against Thebes, the Spartans themselves had rejected their petition, and referred them to Athens; they suggested skilfully the high reputation of the Spartans for probity, and dwelt on the disgrace which they would incur, if, in a cause of such importance, they should commit injustice. But they pleaded in vain: the character which they ascribed to the Spartans, if ever deserved, was now deserved no longer, and their fate was predetermined. The question, Had they done any good to the Lacedæmonians? was repeated to them one by one; and as it could not be answered in the affirmative, they were led off to execu-

tion to the number of 200 Plateæans and twenty-five Athenians. Nor was this a single instance of barbarity, for it was the practice of the Spartans to put their prisoners to death, even the crews of such merchant ships as they captured; an example too readily followed by their antagonists. One, and but one, such action may be cited in modern times, the massacre of the Turkish prisoners at Jaffa, the most hateful, and save one perhaps the most hated, of the remorseless actions of Napoleon. Yet for this there is some shadow of excuse, however insufficient to justify the deed to modern morals, in the broken parole of those who were put to death. To the Greeks such excuse would have been ample; nay, none such was required. Humanity has made no small progress, even in the midst of warfare. The town of Plateæa was levelled with the ground by the Thebans.*

Similar was the fate, similar, but even more obstinate and remarkable was the resistance, of Numantia, the last stronghold of those gallant and generous Celtiberians, who, after the infamous murder of Viriatus, upheld the liberties of Spain against Rome. During five successive years, six Roman officers met with defeats, more or less signal, under its walls, and peace, twice offered and concluded by the unsuccessful generals to retrieve their safety, was as often disowned and violated by the unblushing perfidy of the senate. The circumstances of one of these treaties are so creditable to the *barbarian* Spaniards, as they were called by the Romans, that we will go somewhat out of the way to relate them.

The highest estimate of the Numantine force falls short of 10,000 men. C. Hostilius Mancinus, consul A. U. 615 (B. C. 139), succeeding to the command of 30,000 men employed in besieging them, found his army so dispirited by a long train of reverses, that he judged it best to retire to some distance from the town. He intended to effect this secretly by a night march, but the besieged, getting notice of his design, fell upon the

* Thucyd. iii. 52, 68.

Roman rear, killed 10,000, it is said, and surrounded the rest in such a manner that escape was hopeless. Anxious only for peace and independence, they readily accepted the terms offered by Mancinus as a ransom for his army. What these were does not appear, but they were sworn to by the consul and chief officers. Mancinus, on the first rumour of his defeat, was recalled to Rome, and deputies from Numantia accompanied him, to obtain the ratification of the treaty. But the haughty senate, as once before in the celebrated surrender at the Caudine Forks, refused to admit terms humiliating to the dignity of the republic, though not to profit by the release of their countrymen. The war was continued; but to satisfy their notions of equity Mancinus was given up to the Numantines, a voluntary testimony, to do him justice, to his own good faith in the transaction. Returning to Spain with his successor, Furius, he was led naked to the waist, his hands tied behind him, to the gates of Numantia. But the Numantines refused to take vengeance on an innocent man; saying, that the breach of the public faith could not be expiated by the death of one person. Let the senate abide by the treaty, or deliver up those who have escaped under the shelter of it.

At first perfidy did not seem to prosper. Furius and his successor Calpurnius Piso made no more progress than their predecessors, and so high grew the reputation of the besieged for valour, that no one, Florus says, ever expected to see the back of a Numantine. At last, A. U. 619, the Romans, weary of the war, and anxious above all things to bring it to an end, re-elected to the office of consul Scipio Æmilianus, celebrated as the final conqueror and destroyer of Carthage, and expressly assigned Spain to him as his province, instead of suffering the two consuls to draw lots for the choice of provinces, as was the usual course. Scipio's first care was to restore discipline in his army, which he found corrupted by luxury. With this view he expelled all the idle and profligate followers of the camp; practised his troops in all military exercises, inured them to exposure

and fatigue, and when he thought the ancient tone of Roman discipline was restored, led them, not against the formidable Numantines, but against a neighbouring people. Obtaining a trifling advantage over a party of the former who had attacked his foragers, he refused to prosecute it, thinking it enough that the reputed invincibility of the Numantines was disproved. On this occasion, says Plutarch, the Numantines being reproached on their return to the city, for retiring before an enemy whom they had so often beaten, replied, "The Romans might indeed be the same sheep, but they had gotten a new shepherd."

In the ensuing winter, his army being increased to 60,000 men, Scipio determined to invest the town. Regardless of the disproportion of force, the besieged often offered battle, which he refused, preferring the slow work of famine to encountering the desperation of veteran and approved soldiers. With this view he proceeded to draw lines of circumvallation round the town; and it is said by Appian, that he was the first general who ever took that method of reducing a place, the garrison of which did not decline a battle in the open field. The town was about three miles in compass, and lay on the slope of a hill, at the foot of which ran the river Durius, now called the Douro. Around it Scipio traced a double ditch, six miles in circuit, with a rampart eight feet thick and ten feet high, not including a parapet strengthened by towers at intervals of 125 feet. The river, where it intersected the works, was effectually blocked up by chains and booms. The besieged often endeavoured to check the progress of the Romans, but the superiority of numbers, aided by restored discipline, was too much for them.

The blockade had lasted six months, and the Numantines were hard pressed by famine, before they condescended to inquire whether, if they surrendered, they would meet with honourable treatment. An unconditional surrender was required. Urged even to desperation, they still refused to consign themselves to

slavery or mutilation, for the latter often was the fate of those whose strength and valour the Romans had found reason to respect. Rather than submit to such a fate, they consumed their arms and effects, and houses, in one general conflagration, and dying by the sword, or poison, or fire, left the victor nothing of Numantia to adorn his triumph but the name.*

Such was the unworthy fate of a city which had spared more Roman soldiers than itself could muster armed men. "Most brave," says the historian, "and, in my opinion, most happy in its very misfortunes! It asserted faithfully the cause of its allies; alone it resisted, for how long a time, a nation armed with the strength of the whole world."† It is an easy thing to write rhetorical flourishes, and very often mischievous as well as easy. Had Florus ever undergone one tithe of the sufferings inflicted on the miserable Numantines, we might possibly not have heard of their supreme felicity. It might have done him some good by quickening his moral sense, and might have prevented his beginning the next chapter with the assertion, that "hitherto the Roman people was excellent, pious, holy." Verily, such history as this is a profitable study!

In reading of such sieges as these, one of the first things which strikes a reader not familiar with ancient warfare, is the extreme rudeness of the methods em-

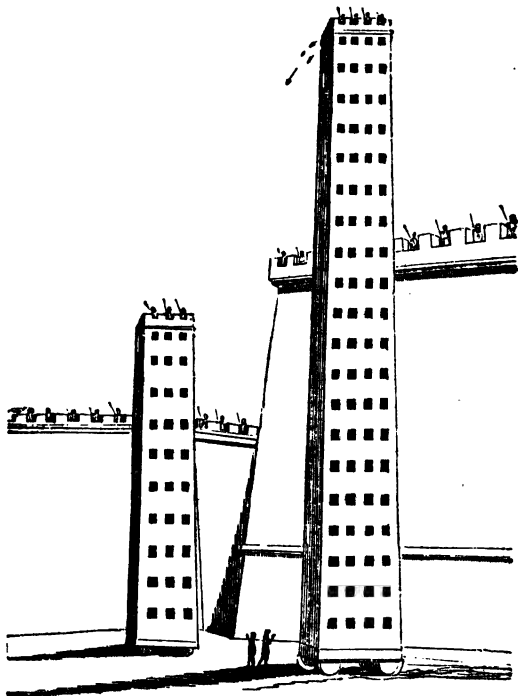
* The end of Numantia is rather differently related by Appian, who says, that after being reduced to such extremity as to eat human flesh, they surrendered at discretion, and were sold as slaves; Scipio retaining fifty of them to grace his triumph. The desperate resolution of the Saguntines, also a Spanish people, confirms the probability of Florus's version. Pressed by Hannibal, the elders of the city collected the most valuable property, both public and private, into a pile, which they consumed by fire, and for the most part threw themselves into the flames. The other male inhabitants slew their wives and children, set fire to their houses, and perished in them, or else fighting to the death.

† Florus, ii. c. 18.

ployed, and the vast expense of time and labour; yet, compared with earlier times, even the siege of Plataea is of no extraordinary duration. Not to go back to the ten-year sieges of Troy and Eira, the Messenians in Ithome held out against the Spartans during nine years; and, in the Peloponnesian war itself, Potidæa resisted for a still longer period than Plataea: such was the patience of a besieging army in waiting for the slow operation of hunger, or for some fortunate chance which, as at Eira, might give possession of the town at an unguarded moment. Before the battering-ram was invented, force could avail little against solid walls; and men soon found out, with Wamba, in *Ivanhoe*, that their hands were little fitted to make mammoicks of stone and mortar. A well-conducted escalade might succeed; a skilful stratagem might deceive the vigilance of the garrison; an ingenious general might devise some method of attack which should render walls useless, as in the attempt to burn out the Plataeans, and might derive some advantage from natural facilities, or even from natural obstacles, so



Battering-ram, combined with tower, from Pompeii, vol. i. p. 78.



Moveable towers, from Pompeii, vol. i. p. 80.

as to convert what the besieged most trusted in into the means of their destruction ; but to overthrow or pass the walls by violence was commonly beyond his power. But the introduction of the ram worked a material change in the relative strength of the besiegers and besieged, for

few walls could be found strong enough to bear the repeated application of its powerful shocks. Next in importance to the ram were those huge moving towers which overtopped walls, and were provided with draw-bridges, by means of which, the battlements being previously cleared of their defenders by missile weapons from above, a body of troops might at once be thrown upon them.

No material alteration in the methods of attack took place till the discovery of gunpowder gave force enough to projectiles to batter down the strongest walls, without exposing men and machinery to the hazard of close approach. The only improvements which did take place consisted in supplying means by which the assailants might approach with less danger to the foot of the walls, and there apply the powerful ram, or, in some instances, resort to mining.

In illustration of these remarks we may notice, very shortly, two of the most remarkable sieges in ancient history, those of Tyre and Syracuse, both resolutely sustained, both finally successful, both carried on by rich and powerful nations who commanded every thing that the best skill of the engineer, or the labour of numbers, could effect. The first was undertaken by Alexander soon after the battle of Issus, B.C. 333. From past ages the Phœnicians had been celebrated among Asiatics for their maritime skill, and Tyre was the most powerful of the Phœnician cities. Trusting in their naval strength to obviate blockade and famine, and in the height of their walls and strength of their situation to repel violence, the Tyrians refused admission to Alexander, remaining faithful to their engagements with Persia. Too weak at sea to assault the walls from his fleet, Alexander had no resource but to carry out a mole to the island. Near the walls there were three fathoms of water, which shoaled gradually to the shore. The mole was built of stone, heaped up, we may suppose, of rough uncemented blocks, like the Plymouth breakwater, and strengthened with piles; and the top was constructed entirely, or in part,

of wood. At first it proceeded with despatch, but more slowly and more difficultly as it approached the walls, from which the besieged annoyed the workmen with missiles, and, at the same time, constantly harassed them from the sea. To protect themselves from these attacks the Macedonians built on the verge of the mole two high towers, armed with engines, and covered with raw hides as defence against darts armed with fire. These the Tyrians destroyed by a peculiarly constructed fire-ship. Having filled a large transport with dry twigs and combustible matter, they fixed two masts in the prow, heaped faggots high around them, and added pitch, sulphur, and every thing that was proper to feed the flames. To each mast they fastened two yard-arms, from the ends of which two cauldrons were suspended, filled with combustibles. The ballast they moved entirely to the stern, to raise her head as high out of the water as possible. Thus prepared, they took advantage of a favourable wind to run her up on the mole, and set fire to her, the crew escaping by swimming; and both mole and towers were speedily involved in the conflagration. Meanwhile the Tyrians, from ships and boats, assisted in the ruin, destroyed the piles, and burnt those engines which would otherwise have escaped the flames. The work therefore had to be recommenced, and it was rebuilt on a larger scale.*

While this labour was proceeding, Alexander's fleet was reinforced in consequence of the submission of the Cypriots and Sidonians, to an extent which enabled him to command the sea, and compelled the Tyrians to block up the mouths of their harbours. Numerous mechanics were employed in constructing military engines; some of which were placed on board the largest ships of the fleet, and the rest were mounted on the mole. The Tyrians, still to have the advantage of height, built wooden towers upon their walls facing the mole. This would seem scarcely necessary if we credit Arrian's as-

* Arrian, ii. 19.

section, 'that the city wall in that part was 150 feet high ;* but it gives us a scale for measuring the altitude of Alexander's towers, which we may assume, from this precaution, to have been as great or greater. On the side to the sea they cast fiery darts into the attacking ships, and showers of stones, which not only did much harm in their fall, but raised a bank which made it impossible to get close up to the walls. The Macedonians therefore were obliged to clear away these impediments ; a work in itself of difficulty and labour, increased by the resolution of the Tyrians, who openly, by sending armed ships, and secretly, by means of divers, cut adrift from their moorings the vessels employed on this service. The Macedonians frustrated this method of defence by using chains instead of cables for mooring, and succeeded at last in clearing away the bank, and getting access to the wall. On the north side, and that next the mole, it resisted their efforts ; but a breach was effected on the south side by battering from the ships, and an assault was made, but without success. On the third day afterwards, the breach being enlarged, a second assault was made under Alexander in person, and the town was carried. Eight thousand Tyrians were slain, and thirty thousand persons, natives and strangers, are said to have been sold for slaves.

* Mr. Rooke, the English translator of Arrian, observes, that "the number here must needs be erroneous, though all the copies which I have seen have it the same." The height certainly is startling, but it is hazardous to conclude that it must be wrong. Not to rely over-much on the walls of Babylon, which, according to the father of history, were about 350 feet high, the battering towers described by Vitruvius, 185 feet in height, were evidently meant to cope with fortifications as gigantic in height as those here described. And after all, the city being built on an abrupt rock, which might perhaps be faced with masonry, if we suppose the whole height from the sea to the battlements to be meant, there is nothing improbable in the statement. The total height of the fortifications of Malta from the sea, we believe, is not much less.

The most remarkable feature of this siege is the battering in breach from the shipping, which would seem a most unstable base for the cumbrous and weighty engines which must have been used. It may be wished that Arrian had been more explicit on this subject, but he has given no explanation of the means employed. Quintus Curtius relates far greater wonders, and in the same proportion is less worthy of belief than the plain and unassuming statement of Arrian, which we have followed.

The siege of Syracuse, undertaken by the Romans under command of Marcus Claudius Marcellus, B.C. 213, is rendered most remarkable by the interposition of the celebrated geometrician Archimedes. Many extraordinary stories are told of the wonderful things done by him, which, if they rested only on the authority of Plutarch, and other compilers of stories, it would be the natural and simple course to reject; but some of the most singular are affirmed by Polybius, almost a contemporary, well skilled in war, and of undoubted credit for honesty and discernment; and one point, of which Polybius makes no mention, has been ascertained to be practicable by modern experiment. It is to be regretted that but a fragment of his account remains.

* Syracuse was divided into five districts, the little island of Ortygia, Acradina, Tycha, Neapolis, and Epipolæ. Marcellus directed his attack against Acradina, which adjoined the sea, with fifty quinqueremes, or vessels with five banks of oars, well filled with soldiers armed with all kinds of missile weapons to clear the walls. He had also eight ships fitted out in a peculiar way with machines called *sambucæ*, from some fancied resemblance to a harp. They were thus prepared: two ships were lashed together, the oars being taken from the two adjoining sides, so as to form, as it were, one large double-keeled vessel, affording a broad and stable base. A ladder was then made, four feet broad, of the necessary height, protected at the sides and above with gratings and hides, so as to form a sort of covered way to the very summit of the walls. It was then so placed,

the foot at the stern, the head projecting beyond the prow, that it could be raised by ropes run through pulleys at the mast-heads. At the top was a platform large enough to contain four men, with high sides which turned on hinges, and which being let down served as bridges to connect the ladder with the walls of the besieged town.

At the request of Hiero, king of Syracuse, Archimedes had in past years constructed a great number of machines for casting stones and darts; with which the walls were so well supplied, that the Romans were defeated in every attempt to approach: Marcellus ran his ships by night beneath the walls, hoping to be within the range of these destructive engines. Here, however, he was anticipated, for Archimedes had hollowed chambers in the walls themselves, with narrow openings, like the embrasures of a Gothic castle, from which archery, and the smaller sorts of missile engines, were directed against the Roman ships with destructive effect. Against the sambucæ he had contrived machines, from which long beams or yards projected, when in use, far beyond the walls. These were heavily weighted with stone or metal to the extent of not less than ten talents, or 1250 pounds. A rapid circular motion being then given to the beam by machinery within the walls, this weighted lever was dashed against the ladder with such force as generally to break it, while the ship itself was exposed to considerable danger. This story not being good enough for Plutarch, he has told us, that when the sambuca was a good way off the walls, a stone ten talents weight was thrown into it, and then a second, and third, which destroyed the vessel; and in consequence considerable ridicule has been thrown on the tale. As told by Polybius it seems little open to objection. Weights, not of half a ton, but several tons, are constantly to be seen on our wharfs suspended on cranes, at a considerable distance from a centre of motion. Add to one of these the machinery requisite to give a rapid circular motion to the projecting arm thus laden, and we have the engine of Archimedes, as described by Polybius. The

geometrician had also fitted out powerful cranes, with hooks and chains, by which he could lift a ship almost out of the water. When it was raised to the greatest practicable height, the chain was slipped, and the vessel usually was either upset by the fall, or plunged so deep as to fill with water. Marcellus is reported to have observed (it must have been a forced joke), that Archimedes used his ships for cups to draw water in. Finally he was obliged to abandon the attack by sea. Appius Claudius, who conducted the siege by land, fared no better: and it was resolved at last to give up all hopes of succeeding by force, and trust to the slow operation of blockade. "Thus," says Polybius, "one man, and one art rightly prepared,* is for some matters a mighty and a wonderful thing; for the Romans, having such power by land and sea, take away but one old man of Syracuse, might have expected immediately to capture the city; but while Archimedes was there, they dared not even to attack it in that manner against which he was capable of defending it."

It is also said that Archimedes set the Roman ships on fire by means of burning mirrors, composed of a combination of plane mirrors, adjusted so as to reflect all the incident rays of light to the same point. The possibility of this has several times been the subject of inquiry to modern philosophers. Kircher took so much interest in the subject, that he went to Syracuse expressly to inquire into the probable position of Marcellus's fleet, and he arrived at the conclusion, that it might have been within thirty yards of the walls. Buffon's experiments, made as well as those of Archimedes with a combination of plane mirrors, are conclusive as to the facility of setting tarred fir plank on fire at a distance of one hundred and fifty feet, and the possibility of doing it at considerably greater distances. Similar planks, and even more combustible materials, were precisely what Archimedes had to deal with. He is said to have operated in this way at the

* *δεόντως ἡρμοσμένη πρὸς ἓνια τῶν πραγμάτων μέγα τι χρῆμα φαίνεται καὶ θαυμάσιον.*

distance of a bow-shot, in which there may very probably be exaggeration.

The sequel of the siege contains no matter of interest. Syracuse was taken by surprise through the negligence of the guard, and Archimedes is said to have been slain by a soldier, as he was deeply intent on the solution of a problem.

Lines of circumvallation continued long to be the principal means employed by the Romans in the reduction of strong places. Even the inventive genius of Cæsar does not appear to have devised the means of dispensing with this tedious and most laborious process. In his Gallic wars he had frequent recourse to it, though the Gallic fortifications, it might be thought, could not be of the most formidable description; and the siege of Alesia furnishes one of the most remarkable instances of it on record. The town stood on an eminence, surrounded on three sides by hills of equal height, at a moderate distance: in front extended a plain, three miles in length. Round the foot of this eminence he dug a trench, twenty feet in width; and again, at an interval of 400 feet, two more, of which the inner one was filled with water: behind them he built a rampart twelve feet high, crowned with battlements, and strengthened with towers at intervals of eighty feet; and, more effectually to confine the besieged, and enable a smaller force to guard the works, the space between them and the inner ditch was filled with three distinct rows of obstacles. The first consisted of a sort of abattis, made with large branches of trees, with the ends squared and sharpened, set firmly in the earth (*cippi*). The next were called lilies (*lilia*), from their resemblance to the calix of that flower, with its upright pistil: these were circular cup-shaped cavities, three feet deep, with a sharpened stake in the centre, projecting about four inches above ground, and covered over with brushwood to deceive assailants. Still nearer to the town iron hooks (*stimuli*, like the Scottish *calthrop*, often used with effect against the English cavalry) were scattered, to lacerate

the feet of the advancing enemy. The whole circuit of these works was fourteen miles, and a similar series protected the troops from attack from without.*

To come down to a period more interesting to modern readers, we find, in the middle ages, the same principles of operation followed, but in a ruder way, since neither men, nor money, nor science were so abundant among the nations who established kingdoms on the ruins of the western empire, as among the Romans; and, moreover, the turbulent independence of a feudal army, whose term of service was usually limited to a certain time, was unfitted for the severe labour, or the patient and continued watching, which the Roman legionaries cheerfully underwent. Still such skill as our ancestors of the middle ages had was borrowed from the Romans; they employed the same species of machines, towers, rams, and moveable galleries called cats, and the same or similar projectile engines, mentioned under the same names of catapultæ, onagri, scorpiones, &c., in the Latin authors of the eleventh and twelfth centuries; and mangonels, trebuchets, war-wolfs, &c. in the vernacular tongue. The first defence of a castle or city was usually a strong wooden palisade called the barriers; and at these many of the most obstinate contests and remarkable feats of arms recorded by Froissart and other chroniclers of the times took place. These being carried, the next step was to level the ground, drain or fill up the ditch, and prepare for bringing up the battering-rams or towers, or scaling-ladders, if it were thought fit to attempt an escalade. In the first crusade the headlong valour of the Christian knights endeavoured in vain to overleap the walls or force the gates of Jerusalem: time was required to construct two moving towers, and on the difficulty of procuring wood the fiction of the enchanted forest of Armida, in Tasso's poem, is founded. The leader of the Genoese, one of the great maritime states of Italy, was the architect.

* Bell. Gall., vii. 72.

This man begunne with wondrous art to make
 Not rammes, not mighty brakes, not slings alone,
 Wherewith the firm and solid walls to shake,
 To cast a dart, or throw a shaft or stone;
 But, framed of pines and firres, did undertake
 To build a forteresse huge, to which was none
 Yet ever like, whereof he clothed the sides
 Against the balles of fire with raw bulls' hides.

In mortisses and sockets framed just
 The beames, the studdes, and punchions joyned he fast;
 To beat the cities wall, beneath forth burst
 A ram with horned front; about her wast
 A bridge the engine from her side out thrust,
 Which on the wall, when need required, she cast;
 And on her top a turret small up stood,
 Strong, surely armed, and builded of like wood.

Set on a hundred wheels, the rolling masse
 On the smooth lands went nimbly up and downe,
 Though full of armes, and armed men it was,
 Yet with small pains it ran as it had flowne;
 Wondered the camp so quick to see it passe,
 They praised the workmen, and their skill unknowne;
 And on that day two towres they builded more,
 Like that which sweet Clorinda burnt before.*

The archers shotte their arrowes sharpe and keene,
 Dipt in the bitter juyce of poyson strong;
 The shady face of heaven was scantily seen,
 Hid with the cloud of shafts and quarries long;
 Yet weapons sharp with greater fury beene
 Cast from the towres the Pagan troops among;
 For thence flew stones, and cliffs of marble rocks,
 Trees shod with iron, timber, logs, and blocks.

A thunderbolt seemed every stone; it brake
 His limmes and armour so on whom it light,
 That life and soule it did not only take,
 But all his face and shape disfigured quight:

* Fairfax's Tasso, xviii. 43-5.

The lances staid not in the wounds they make,
But through the gored body tooke their flight
From side to side; through flesh, through skin and rinde
They flew, and flying left sadde death behinde.

But yet not all this force and fury drove
The Pagan people to forsake the walle,
But to revenge these deadly blowes they strove
With darts that flie, with stones and trees that fall;
For need so cowards oft courageous prove,
For liberty they fight, for life, for all,
And oft with arrows, shafts, and stones that flie,
Give bitter answer to a sharp replie.

This while the fierce assailants never cease,
But sternly still maintaine a threefold charge,
And 'gainst the cloud of shafts draw nigh at ease,
Under a pentise made of many a targe;
The armed towres close to the bulwarks prease,
And strive to grapple with the battled marge,
And launch their bridges out; mean while below
With iron fronts, the rammes the walls down throwe.

(68—71.)

Rinaldo, according to the romancer, raises a ladder,
and scales the walls single-handed; but Godfrey of
Bouillon, who is present in one of the towers, finds
greater obstacles :—

For there not man with man, nor knight with knight
Contend, but engines there with engines fight.

For in that place the Paynims reared a post
Which late had served some gallant ship for mast,
And over it another beam they crost,
Pointed with iron sharpe, to it made fast
With ropes, which as men would the dormant tost
Now in, now out, now backe, now forward cast;
In his swift pullies oft the men withdrew
The tree, and oft the riding balke forth threw.

The mighty beame redoubled oft his blowes,
And with such force the engine smote and hit,
That her broad side the towre wide open throwes,
Her joynts were broke, her rafters cleft and split;

But yet, 'gainst every hap whence mischief grows
 Prepared, the piece ('gainst such extremes made fit),
 Lanced forth two sithes, sharpe, cutting, long, and broade,
 And cut the ropes, whereon the engine roade.

As an old rocke, which age, or stormy winde
 Teares from some craggy hill, or mountaine steepe,
 Doth breake, doth bruise, and into dust doth grinde
 Woods, houses, hamlets, herds, and folds of sheep;
 So fell the beame, and down with it all kinde
 Of arms, of weapons, and of men did sweep,
 Wherewith the towers once or twice did shake,
 Trembled the walls, the hills and mountains quake.

(80, 81, 82.)

The Turks attempt to burn the tower with wildfire, but are prevented by a providential tempest, and it approaches so close that the besiegers throw their draw-bridge on the walls. The courage of Godfrey was animated by a divine vision of all those princes who had been slain in the sacred war, bearing arms in behalf of the crusaders.

And on the bridge he stept, but there was staid
 By Soliman, who entrance all denied;
 That narrow tree to virtue great was made
 The field, as in few blowes right soon was tried.
 Here will I give my life for Sion's aid,
 Here will I end my days, the Soldan cried;
 Behind me cut, or breake this bridge, that I
 May kill a thousand Christians first, then die.

But thither fierce Rinaldo threatening went,
 And at his sight fled all the Soldan's traine;
 What shall I do? if here my life be spent,
 I spend and spill (quoth he) my blood in vaine;
 With that his steps from Godfrey back he bent,
 And to him let the passage free remaine,
 Who threatening followed as the Soldan fled,
 And on the walls the purple crown dispreid:

About his head he tost, he turned, he cast
 That glorious ensign with a thousand twines;
 Thereon the wind breathes with his sweetest blast—
 Thereon with golden rays glad Phebus shines:

Earth laughs for joy, the streames forbear their hast,
 Floods clap their hands, on mountains dance the pines ;
 And Sion's towres and sacred temples smile
 For their deliv'rance from that bondage vile.
 (xviii. 98—100.)

We originally meant only to introduce Tasso's description of the towers, and have been led on to protract the quotation to far greater length, from finding not only so lively, but there is all reason to believe so accurate, a description, making allowance for a little poetical exaggeration, of the mode of combat then in use. The poet has at least the merit of being true to the facts related by the historians. Two towers were constructed, one of which, intrusted to the charge of Raymond, Count of Toulouse, was burnt by the besieged; the other, directed by Godfrey in person, was brought safely up to the walls. Large beams were applied to prevent its close approach, as described by the poet, and these being cut away, were taken possession of, and proved very serviceable to the crusaders. The walls were cleared, not only by archery, but by a much less warlike and romantic device. The wind blowing into the town, the assailants set on fire a mattress stuffed with silk (*culcitram bombyce plenam*), and bags of straw, so that "they who were appointed to defend the wall, unable to open eyes or mouth, besotted and bewildered with the eddies of the smoky darkness, deserted their post. Which being known, the general with all haste commanded the beams which they had captured from the enemy to be brought up, and one end resting on the machine, the other on the wall, he ordered the moveable side of the tower to be let down; which being supported on them, served in the place of a bridge of suitable strength."* This, it must be confessed, is a less romantic way of gaining entrance than fighting hand to hand with Solymán: but it is true, for the valour and personal prowess of Godfrey of Bouillon were unsurpassed, and there is no reason to suspect that flattering historians have perverted the fact,

* William of Tyre.

that Godfrey, noblest of the crossed chiefs in character as in station, was the third man to enter that holy city, for the delivery of which he longed so ardently, and had sacrificed so much. Two brothers named Letold and Engelbert, otherwise unknown to fame, were the first who won their way to these contested walls.

For reasons above given the strong fortresses of feudal pride were more frequently carried by a sudden and vigorous attack, than by the tedious and expensive process of regular siege. Of such attacks some remarkable instances occur in the wars between England and Scotland, which at some future period we may perhaps notice; at present it is more to our purpose to quote from the graphic pages of Froissart this short passage, which is so completely ancient in character that change the names and it might pass for the act of a Roman army:—

“The Englysshemen, that had lyen long before the Ryoll* more than nyne weekes, had made in the mean space two belfroys of grete tymbre, with four stages, every belfroy upon foure grete whelys, and the sydes toward the towne were covered with cure boly,† to defend them fro fyre and fro shotte; and into every stage there were poynted a C archers: by strength of men these two belfroys were brought to the walles of the towne, for they had so filled the dykes, that they might well be brought just to the walles; the archers in these stages shotte so holly togyder, that none durst apere at their defence, without they were well pavysshed,‡ and between these two belfroys there were a CC men with pic-axes to mine the walles, and so they brake through the walles. * * * When sir Agous de Ban, who was captain within, knewe that the people of the towne wolde yelde

* La Réole, a town in Gascony.

† Boiled leather, “cuir boulu.”

‡ Pavisses were large shields or defences made of plank, &c., which archers and others bore before them, or fixed in the earth, that they might shoot, mine, &c., in partial cover from the shot of the garrison.

up, he went into the castell with his companye of souldyers, and whyle they of the towne were entretyng he conveyed out of the towne gret quantyte of wyne and other provisyon, and then closed the castell gates, and sayd how he wolde not yeld up so sone. 'Then the erle (of Derby) entred into the towne and layde siege round about the castell as nere as he mighte, and rered up all his engynes, the which caste nyght and day agaynst the walles, but they dyd lytell hurt, the walles were so strong of harde stone; it was sayd that of olde tyme it had been wrought by the handes of the Sarasyns, who made their warkes so strongly that ther is none such now a dayes. When the erle sawe that he colde do no good with his engynes, he caused theym to cease; then he called to hym his myners, to thyntent that they shuld make a myne under alle the walles, the whiche was nat sone made."*

In the time of Froissart the invention of gunpowder had already begun to work a change in the art of war: still, then and for some time afterwards, the imperfection of the artillery in use rendered them of little real service.† Usually of immense and unwieldy size and weight, the difficulty of transporting them from place to place was extreme, and they could not be fired more than three or four times in the day, at great expense and with uncertain execution. Even so late as the siege of Magdeburg, in 1631, it is said that 1550 cannon shots were fired against one wall with but little effect. But as the art of gunnery advanced, the battering train was found to be an overmatch for the strongest fortresses that had yet been constructed, and a new system of fortification came gradually into use. Low bastions and curtains took place of the lofty towers and walls of former castles; and still the advantage is so entirely transferred from the besieged to the besiegers, that the termination

[* Lord Berners' Froissart, vol. i. cap. 109.

† One of these old guns, of remarkable size, made of bars of hammered iron hooped together, is to be seen in Edinburgh Castle, and is called Mons Meg.

of a siege pursued according to the rules of art is reduced almost to certainty as to the time and method of its issue. This has diminished the interest of modern sieges, by making ultimate capture almost a certainty, and rendering it the interest of the garrison rather to make terms while they have something to give up, than to hold out to those extremes of difficulty and distress, of which ancient history abounds in striking examples. It has also rendered both the attack and defence matters more of combination and science, and less of individual gallantry. There is, however, one war in the transition stage, as it were, from ancient to modern tactics, distinguished especially by the number and length of its sieges, and by the constancy and desperate valour shown by the beleaguered party in every instance. Even were we indifferent to the parties, the narrations would in themselves be deeply interesting, but the nobleness of their cause renders the sufferings of the brave defenders doubly affecting—their triumphs doubly glorious. The reader will readily conclude that we refer to the desperate struggle of the Netherlands for civil and religious liberty against the mighty despotism of Spain. Three sieges which occurred in this war are especially worthy of the reader's attention, those of Leyden, Haarlem, and Ostend. That of Leyden has been already noticed in the first volume; and after some hesitation we have selected the siege of Ostend for relation here, as being more full of incident, not of interest, than that of Haarlem. We give it from the contemporary historian, Bentivoglio:—

“ We will now come to the siege of Ostend, which, being one of the most memorable of this our age, doth certainly challenge, that, as much brevity and diligence as may be being joyned together, it be duly considered and represented with all clearness. It was above three years before it was brought to an end; and it was almost as uncertain at the last day as at the first to which side the victory did incline. The besieged never wanted fresh succours by sea, nor did the besiegers at any time cease advancing by land. Infinite were the batteries, the

assaults infinite; so many were the mines, and so obstinate the counter-mines, as it may be almost affirmed as much work was done under ground as above ground. New names were to be found for new engines. There was a perpetual dispute between the sea and land: the works on the latter could not operate so much as the mines made by the former did destroy. Great store of blood ran every where, and men were readier to lose it than to preserve it, till such time as the besieged wanting ground, and rather what to defend than defence, they were at last forced to forego that little spot of ground which was left them, and to yield.

“Ostend stands upon the sea-shore, and in the midst of a marish ground, and of divers channels which come from the continent; but it is chiefly environed almost on all sides by two of the greatest of them,* by which the sea enters into the land, and grows so high when it is full sea, as you would rather think the town were buried than situated in the sea. In former times it was an open place, and served rather for a habitation for shepherds than for soldiers. But the importancy of the seat being afterwards considered, the houses were inclosed with a platform instead of a wall, and from time to time the line was so flank round about it, as it proved to be one of the strongest towns of all the province of Flanders. It is divided into two parts, which are called the old town and the new. The former, which is the lesser, stands towards the sea; the latter and greater lies towards the land. The old town is fenced from the fury of the sea by great piles of wood driven into the ground, and joined together for the defence of that part, and there the waves sufficiently supply the part of a ditch. The channels may be said to do the like on the sides; and, especially at full sea, of channels they become havens, being then capable of any kind of vessels, and by them at all times the middle size of barks enter into the ditches, and from the ditches in diverse parts into the town itself; to boot, with the chief well-

* See the medal at the head of this chapter.

flanked line on the outside of the ditch, towards the land side is a strada coperta raised, which is so well furnished with new flanks, and with a new ditch, as this outward fortification doth hardly give way to any of the inward ones. The town is but of a small compass, and is ennobled rather by its situation and fortifications than by any splendour either of inhabitants or houses. The United Provinces caused it to be very carefully kept at this time, wherefore it was largely provided of men, artillery, ammunition, and of whatsoever else was necessary for the defence thereof. In this condition was the town when the Archduke resolved to sit down before it."

On the east of the town there was a detached fort called St. Alberto, on the west another called Bredene, both which had been abandoned by the garrison. These were occupied by the besieging army, which proceeded to surround Ostend on the landward with a chain of works, not without sharp fighting, for the governor, Sir Francis Vere, had raised redoubts in front of his fortifications, and hotly contested every inch of ground. It seemed also necessary to cut off the communication with the sea, and with this view a bank was run out on the eastern side from St. Alberto to prevent barks from entering by the channel on that quarter. But it was also expedient to block up the channel on the side of Bredene, and in doing this greater difficulties were to be overcome.

The siege began in the summer of 1601, and the autumn had been consumed in these works, when, towards the end of December, a terrible storm at sea so shattered the town, that the inhabitants, despairing to resist an assault, began to parley; but their spirits were recruited, and the negotiations broken off by a seasonable reinforcement both of men and all manner of provisions. The Archduke, being thus deluded of his hopes, gave order that a battery should be raised on the side of St. Alberto, which played so furiously upon the sea bulwark, that a practicable breach was soon made, and an assault ordered. To divert the enemy, directions were given that Count Bucquoy, who commanded at Bredene, should pass the channel there, and fall with his men on

the wall where it was beaten down, 'and that upon the land side there should be alarms given every where. " When they came to the assault the assailants behaved themselves gallantly, and used all means to get upon the wall; and though many of them fell down dead and wounded, and that the horror of night, which already came on, made their dangers the more terrible, yet did it serve rather to set the Catholics on fire, than to make them cool in their fight. But there appeared no less resoluteness of resistance in those within: for opposing themselves valiantly on all sides, and being very well able to do it, as having so many men, and such store of all other provisions, they stoutly did defend themselves on all sides. Upon the coming on of night they had set up many lights in divers parts of the town, whereby they the better maintained the places assigned to them, did with more security hit those that assailed them, and came the better to where their help was required. They also soon discerned that they were all false alarms that were given without, and that the true assault was made only in one place. To this was added, that Count Bucquoy, not finding the water of the aforesaid channel so low as he believed, he could by no means pass over them. Yet the Catholics did for a long time continue their assault, but the defendants' advantages still increasing, the assailants were at last forced to give over with great loss; for there were above six hundred slain and wounded. Nor did those within let slip the occasion of prejudicing yet more the Catholics as they retreated: for plucking up some of their sluices, by which they both received the sea-water into their ditches and let it out again, they turned the water with such violence into the channel, which the Catholics had passed over before they came to the assault, and which they were to pass over again in their retreat, as many of them were unfortunately drowned."

The year 1602 set in with such severe cold that the Archduke was advised to abandon the siege. But he would not be persuaded thereto, thinking the King's honour and his own engaged in its success. He ordered

therefore a great platform to be raised in the quarter of St. Alberto, which might command the town as much as possible, and gave new orders that Bucquoy should advance, with all possible speed, the great bank which was designed to obstruct the channel of Bredene. Having given these orders, he retired to Ghent, and left the camp-master, John di Rivas, in command of the siege, who employed himself diligently in forwarding these important works. "To the first and largest foundation, which was well incorporated with wet sand and other condense matter, others of the like sort were added, till the dyke was grown to the height it ought to be; and the breadth thereof was very extraordinary great. To boot with the ordinary plain thereof, upon which two great cannons might stand abreast, there was a great parapet raised in it against the town to shelter the soldier; and which, being in divers places furnished with artillery, did greatly endamage the enemy likewise on that side. This work was made in a sandy and low situation, and whither the sea at full tide came; so as it cannot be said with how much expense, labour, and loss of blood, this work was advanced." Still the town continued to receive succours as plentifully as ever, and the works proceeded so slowly from without, that the hopes of bringing the siege to a happy end did daily rather decrease than increase. Yet Rivas was very diligent in discharging his duty; the platform was completed and mounted with cannon, and the besieged were driven from some of their outer works: these were then furnished with artillery, which he turned against the fortifications which sheltered the town on that side.

"Some progress was likewise daily made on Bredene's side in the advancing the great dyke. Bucquoy had the chief charge thereof, and it was called by his name. And he used all possible diligence to infest the town and the entrance of the channel on that side. But there appeared no less vigilancy in the besieged; their courage abounded, according as the town did abound with all sorts of provisions. There was hardly any one day in which they did not sally out; nor did the be-

siegers do any thing which cost not much labour and blood. The platform was made chiefly of bavons and other wood, and the great dyke was composed of the like materials. Two furious batteries were therefore levelled from the town, with artificial fire-balls against these two works, to set them on fire, and indamage them by that means. Nor did they fail in their design : for by long battery they at last took fire, and were thereby so torn and spoiled, as it cost much time and the death of many men to remake them. Nor was the enemies' loss less either in number or quality.

“Pompeio Torgone, a famous engineer, was at this time come from Italy to Flanders, drawn thither by the fame of this siege. He had a very ready wit, which made him apt for inventions in his calling ; but having never till then passed from the theory to the practical part in military affairs, it was soon seen that many of his imaginations did not, upon trial, prove such as in appearance they promised to be. He began to build a castle of wood upon boats fastened together. The castle was round, high, and large proportionably. On the top thereof it was capable of six great pieces of artillery on one side, and on the other side there was place enough for those soldiers who were to attend them. Torgone intended to bring this machine into the mouth of the channel, and to firm it there, where succour was brought into Ostend, hoping hereby to keep the town from relief. But this could not so soon be done, but that it was preceded by the other work of drawing the great dyke to the same channel, whereupon to raise afterwards a fort, by which that passage might be so much the more impeded. To accelerate this work likewise, Torgone be-thought himself of other engines, by which that so great quantity of materials, whereof the dyke was made, might the more easily be brought to employment. The said materials being put together in manner as they ought to be, he put a certain number of little barrels under the hollow of the middle thereof, and on the sides, by which at full sea the engines floated, and were afterwards brought by cranes to joyn with the dyke in that part

where the work was continued on. These engines were called flotes. But such was the tempest of the enemies' cannon-shot, which incessantly fell upon them, when they rested upon the sand; and then again they were so prejudiced by the sea-storms, as oft-times the work of many days was destroyed in a few hours. And really it was a pitiful case to see how much blood was there shed, and how little the meaner sort of people who were employed therein did out of a desire of gain value it."

This was the condition of Ostend when the Archduke bethought himself to give the care of the siege to the Marquis Spinola. Great certainly was the honour of such an employment, yet there seemed so little prospect of success that Spinola hesitated for some time; but, finally, being persuaded there was more of hope than fear in the offer that was made him, he resolved cheerfully to accept it.

"The first thing the Marquis did was to make great store of provision of all such materials as were necessary, as well for the work of the great dyke on Bredene's side, as for the other works which were to be made on the side of St. Alberto, on which side the town was chiefly intended to be straitened and forced: the ground over against it was all sandy, and full of several channels and little rivulets, besides those two greater channels which fell into the sea, as you have often heard. The same sea likewise, at the flood, did so whirl about every place thereabouts, as ground was not any where to be found to make trenches, which were therefore to be supplied with the above said materials. These were chiefly brought by the flotes invented by Torgone; and though the great dyke did daily advance, yet it was known that such a work would prove too long and too uncertain. The hope of keeping out succour growing there every day less and less, Spinola bent all his endeavours to take the town by force. We told you before that all vessels were hindered from coming into the lesser channel, on St. Alberto's side, which falls there into the sea by a fort. Yet the channel itself was of great advantage to the enemy on that side, for it served for a

great ditch to their counterscarp, which was strong of itself, and yet made stronger by many flanks by which it was defended. Before the Catholics could come to assault the counterscarp, they must first pass over the channel, which was so hard to do with safety or shelter in any place thereof, as it was evidently seen that many of them must perish, being exposed to be injured by the enemy. The oppugnation was led on, on four sides, from St. Alberto's quarter. The Germans wrought nearer the sea; then followed the Spaniards; after them the Italians; and on the outmost side, more towards land, the Walloons and Burgonians. Great was the fervency of all these nations; and such a contention there was among them in striving which of them should most advance the works, as the soldiers' emulation seemed rather a contest between enemies than between rivals. The channel was narrower and more shallow where the Burgonians and Walloons wrought. They were therefore the first that passed over it, and afterwards the other nations did the like. To pass over it, a great quantity of the aforesaid materials were thrown into every part thereof, where the aforesaid nations wrought. Those materials were reduced to dykes or banks, upon which the soldiers advanced towards the town. But very many of them were slain and wounded. For the defendants, with their hail of musquet-shot and tempest of greater artillery, charged with little bullets and murdering shot in great quantity, and oft-time with artificial fire, made the Catholics' work on all sides very bloody. The soldiers, that they might go the best sheltered that they could, invented many fences: some consisted of gabions filled with earth, well joined and fastened together; others of long bavins, which stood upright, and stood so thick as they were musket proof; and others, of several forms, made of the aforesaid materials. Torgone invented likewise a great cart, from which a bridge made of cloth and cords might unexpectedly be thrown over the channel, and so the enemies' defences might the easier be assaulted. The cart stood upon four very high wheels; and upon the fore-part thereof rose up, as it

were, the mast of a ship, which served chiefly to let down and to take up the bridge. But the whole bulk proved to be of so cumbersome a greatness, and so hard to be managed, that, before it was undertaken, it was known it could work no effect. The aforesaid fences were wrought where the artillery of the town could not reach; and, at the flowing of the sea, they were brought upon the floats, to the places where they were made use of. Great was the mortality likewise of those that wrought here; the enemy making usually such havock of them with their muskets, artillery, and sallies, as oft-times hardly one of them could be saved. But money still got new men, and oft-times the soldiers themselves wrought. Nor was Spinola wanting in being in all places at all times, and in exposing himself as well as any of the rest to all labour and danger; encouraging some, rewarding others, and behaving himself so, as his imitating, without any manner of respect unto himself, the most hazardous works of others, made the rest the more ready to imitate his.

“When each nation had passed the channel, each of them began with like emulation to force the ravelins and half-moons which sheltered the counterscarp. And the Walloons and Burgonians, by reason of their quarter, were the first that did it, but with much effusion of blood, even of the noblest amongst them; for amongst the rest, Catris, a Walloon campmaster, was lost; a valiant and greatly experienced soldier, and whom Spinola highly esteemed, both for his deeds and counsel. With the like progress, and no less loss of blood, did the other nations advance. So as the enemies at last lost all the fortifications which they had without their principal line; about which a great ditch ran, but not so hard to pass as was the channel which fenced the counterscarp. The easier doing of it made the Catholics hope better in the effecting thereof; wherefore, full of fresh courage, they prepared to continue their labours more heartily than ever, that they might the sooner end the siege; but the winter being already come on did much injure their works, and the sea did then more destroy them by her tempests.

The enemy did likewise make very fierce opposition ; they set up batteries within against the batteries without ; mines opposed countermines ; they repaired themselves on all sides, and as fast as one rampire was lost they set up another. So as the Catholics were to advance by inchmeal ; and yet they did so advance, as by the spring they were got well forward into the ditch.

“ These already progressions of Marquis Spinola, together with his still daily proceedings, made the United Provinces shrewdly afraid that they should at last lose Ostend. It was therefore consulted amongst their chief commanders how the town might be best preserved : which might be done by two ways ; either by some important diversion, or by raising the siege by main force. The second affair brought with it such difficulties, as the first was embraced. Wherefore they resolved to besiege Sluce ; a town which likewise stood upon the sea, and of so great consequence, as did rather exceed than come short of those of Ostend.”

Sluys was accordingly besieged and taken, to the great satisfaction of the Flemish, that, in three months' time and with the loss of so little blood, they had made a greater acquisition than that of Ostend, which would cost above three years' expense of time, and an infinity of Spanish gold and blood, if it could hold out no longer. But though Spinola made an unsuccessful attempt to relieve Sluys, he could not be prevailed on to break up the siege of Ostend, and his troops were inflamed the more by a desire of counterbalancing that loss. So that at last, after much slaughter, they won the ditch and the first line of fortifications ; but meanwhile a new one had been raised by those within.

“ Sluce was just then lost : and it was feared that Count Maurice would come to the relief of Ostend. The Catholics being therefore so much the more moved, and Spinola being again returned, it is not to be expressed with what fervour they fell to their works on all sides. The greatest progress was made towards the old town of Ostend ; and because when they should have won that, they might easily hinder the entrance into the channel, by

the mouth whereof succour was brought from the sea ; and for that the new town was much commanded by the old, therefore Spinola did the more reinforce his batteries, assaults, mines, and all his other most efficacious works on that side than on any other ; nor was it long ere the Catholics had almost wholly taken it.

“ They likewise advanced after the same manner against the new fortifications, so as now the besieged had no where whither to retreat ; wherefore, wanting ground to defend, when they most abounded in all things for defence, they were at last forced to surrender the town ; which was done about the midst of September, upon all the most honourable conditions that they could desire. Count Maurice was often minded to attempt the succour by main force ; but considering that he was to enter into an enemy’s country, amongst strong and well-guarded towns, and that he should meet with men that were very ready to fight, he thought it not fit, after his prosperous success at Sluce, to hazard falling into some misfortune, as upon such an occasion he might peradventure do, and therefore he forebore to do it. It was a remarkable thing to see so many soldiers march out of a town ; for there were above four thousand of them, all strong and healthful, they having enjoyed great plenty of all things in Ostend, by reason of their continual succours. So as besides great store of artillery, there was found in the town such abundance of victuals, ammunition, and of whatsoever else may be imagined for the defence of a royal town, as the like was never known to be in any other place.

“ Thus ended the siege of Ostend ; very memorable, doubtless, in itself, but much more in consideration of the so great expense of monies and time which the winning and losing of it cost. The siege continued above three years ; in which time the constant opinion was, that there died, what by the sword, what by sickness, above a hundred thousand men between the one and the other side ; whereby it may be conceived what proportionable monies and other things were therein spent. The town being yielded up, the Archduke and Infanta had the curiosity

to go see it, and went from Gaunt thither, where they found nothing but a misshapen chaos of earth, which hardly retained any show of the first Ostend. Ditches filled up ; curtains beaten down ; bulwarks torn in pieces ; half-moons, flanks, and redoubts so confused one with another, as one could not be distinguished from another ; nor could it be known on which side the oppugnation, or on which side the defence was ; yet they would know all, and receive the whole relation from Spinola's own mouth. He represented at full the last posture of the siege : he showed the Spaniards' quarters, and that of the Italians, as also those of each other nation. He related how stoutly they contended who should outvie one another in painstaking ; on which part the greatest resistance was made within ; where the dispute was most difficult without ; where they wanted ground to retreat unto ; where the enemy used their utmost power ; and where at last the town was surrendered. The Archduke saw the great platform, the great dyke, and whatsoever else of curious might be suggested by the unusual face of that siege ; but not without the Infanta's great compassion, and even almost tears, by looking upon the horror of those parts where the sword, fire, sea, and earth may be said to have conspired together in making so long and so miserable a destruction of Christians. They both of them did very much commend Spinola, and did also thank the rest of the commanders who had deserved well in that enterprise. Nor did they less gratulate the inferior officers and soldiers, who had exposed themselves most to those dangers."*

Remarkable in modern history is the siege and storm of Magdeburg in the thirty years' war by the Imperial troops, commanded by Tilly, when that general blighted the laurels acquired in thirty-six successful battles, and fixed an indelible stain upon his reputation. Even poetical justice might be satisfied by the events of his after-life, which, from a series of victories became one of reverses,

* Bentivoglio, Hist. of Wars in Flanders, translated by Henry, Earl of Monmouth, 1698.

produced in part, at least, by his own act, if it be true that the excesses perpetrated on this occasion produced a lasting bad effect on the discipline of his army. But, on the plains of Leipzic, in the person of Gustavus Adolphus, he met at length with his superior in the art of war.

“I must now arm my breast with sternness, my heart with impenetrability, while I relate the events which broke in foaming billows over this wretched city,—events, for their magnitude, extraordinary: for their mournfulness, but too calamitous; for their importance, rarely known in former ages; and for their rarity, easily unheard of. So may this mind be able to recite the reverses, the tragic incidents which in this our age, by inevitable destiny, have oppressed Magdeburg, a city of the empire, powerful and strong as ancient,—this pen endure through the description of such horrid destruction. But whence to commence the tempests of so pitiable an event? whence seek those dreadful varieties of punishment, for the relation of which all Germany is scarce sufficient? I am far from thinking that with this pen I can do justice to so mournful, so extraordinary a calamity. For he who would worthily express a catastrophe, which will amaze furthest posterity, must needs be qualified by an iron memory, a strong and unconquered style, since it is his duty to find words answerable to actions.”*

The modest doubts expressed in the above rather pompous passage have not restrained the historian, from whom we quote, from proving, in a long and tedious narrative, that he justly estimated the relative extent of his subject and his powers. We purpose to take warning by his example, and act upon the diffidence which he expresses. The reader is as capable of imagining, as the author, unless an eye-witness, of describing, the behaviour of soldiers flushed with rage and blood let loose upon an unarmed population: and either is likely to produce but a confused picture, made up chiefly by ringing the changes upon what the author of ‘Old Mor-

* Lotichius, *Rerum Germanicarum*, lib. xxxvii. p. 1.

talities' calls "the four pleas of the crown." Instead, therefore, of multiplying anecdotes of brutality and suffering, we shall only give the narratives of two eye-witnesses, the simplicity of which is a guarantee for their truth. The first is written by the minister of a church in Magdeburg. It is necessary to premise that the assault was made at daybreak, as the hour when the garrison were most likely to be off their guard, and at a time when a general belief was entertained that Tilly was about to break up the siege. It was therefore entirely unexpected.

"Going out of church immediately after sermon, some people of St. James's parish passed by, and told me the enemy had entered the town. With difficulty could I persuade myself that this was anything more than a false alarm; but the news unfortunately proved too true. I then lost my presence of mind, and as my wife and maid-servant were with me, we ran directly to my colleague, M. Malsio's house, and left our own house open. At M. Malsio's we found many people, who had fled to him in great perplexity. We comforted and exhorted each other, as far as the terror of our minds would give us leave. I was summoned thence to discharge the last duties to a colonel, who lay dangerously wounded. I resolved to go, and sent my maid to fetch my gown: but before my departure from my wife and neighbours, I told them that the affair appeared to me to be concluded, and that we should meet no more in this world. My wife reproached me in a flood of tears, crying, 'Can you prevail on yourself to leave me to perish all alone? You must answer for it before God!' I represented to her the obligations of my function, and the importance of the moments I was called upon to give my assistance in.

"As I crossed the great street a multitude of matrons and young women flocked about me, and besought me, in all the agonies of distress, to advise them what to do. I told them, my best advice was to recommend themselves to God's protecting grace, and prepare for death. At length I entered the colonel's lodging, and found him

stretched on the floor, and very weak. I gave him such consolation as the disorder of my mind would permit me : he heard me with great attention, and ordered a small present of gold to be given me, which I left on the table. In this interval, the enemy poured in by crowds at the Hamburg gate, and fired on the multitude as upon beasts of prey. Suddenly my wife and maid-servant entered the room, and persuaded me to remove immediately, alleging we should meet with no quarter, if the enemy found us in an apartment filled with arms. We ran down into the court-yard of the house, and placed ourselves in the gateway. Our enemies soon burst the gate open, with an eagerness that cannot be described. The first address they made to me was, ' Priest, deliver thy money.' I gave them about four and twenty shillings in a little box, which they accepted with good will : but when they opened the box, and found only silver, they raised their tone, and demanded gold. I represented to them that I was at some distance from my house, and could not at present possibly give them more. They were reasonable enough to be contented with my answer, and left us, after having plundered the house, without offering us any insult. There was a well-looking youth among the crowd, to whom my wife addressed herself, and besought him in God's name to protect us : ' My dear child,' said he, ' it is a thing impossible ; we must pursue our enemies ;' and so they retired.

" In that moment another party of soldiers rushed in, who demanded also our money. We contented them with seven shillings and a couple of silver spoons, which the maid fortunately had concealed in her pocket. They were scarce gone before a soldier entered alone with the most furious countenance I ever saw ; each cheek was puffed out with a musket-ball, and he carried two muskets on his shoulder. The moment he perceived me, he cried with a voice of thunder, ' Priest, give me thy money, or thou art dead.' As I had nothing to give him, I made my apology in the most affecting manner : he levelled a piece to shoot me, but my wife luckily turned it with her hand, and the ball passed over my

head. At length, finding we had no money, he asked for plate : my wife gave him some silver trinkets, and he went his way.

" A little after came four or five soldiers, who only said, ' Wicked priest, what doest thou here ? ' Having said thus much, they departed.

" We were now inclined to shelter ourselves in the uppermost lodgings of the house, hoping there to be less exposed and better concealed. We entered a chamber that had several beds in it, and passed some time there in the most insupportable agonies. Nothing was heard in the streets but the cries of the expiring people ; nor were the houses much more quiet ; every thing was burst open or cut to pieces. We were soon discovered in our retirement : a number of soldiers poured in, and one who carried a hatchet made an attempt to cleave my skull, but a companion hindered him and said, ' Comrade, what are you doing ? Don't you perceive that he is a clergyman ? '

" When these were gone a single soldier came in, to whom my wife gave a crape handkerchief off her neck ; upon which he retired without offering us any injury. His successor was not so reasonable : for entering the chamber with his sword drawn, he immediately discharged a blow upon my head, saying, ' Priest, give me thy money.' The stroke stunned me ; the blood gushed out in abundance, and frightened my wife and servant to that degree that they both continued motionless. The barbarian turned round to my wife, aimed a blow at her, but it glanced fortunately on her gown, which happened to be lined with furs, and wounded her not. Amazed to see us so submissive and patient, he looked at us fixedly for some moments. I laid hold of this interval to represent to him that I was not in my own house, being come to the place where I was to discharge my duty to a dying person, but if he would grant us quarter, and protect us to our home, I would then bestow upon him all I had. ' Agreed, priest,' said he, ' give me thy wealth, and I will give thee the watch-word : it is Jesu Maria ; pronounce that, and no one will hurt thee.' We

went down stairs directly, highly contented to have found such a protector. The street was covered with the dead and dying; their cries were enough to have pierced the hearts of the greatest barbarians. We walked over the bodies, and when we arrived at the church of St. Catherine, met an officer of distinction on horseback. This generous person soon discovered us, and seeing me covered with blood, said to the person who conducted us, 'Fellow-soldier, fellow-soldier, take care what you do to these persons.' At the same time he said to my wife, 'Madam, is yonder house yours?' My wife having answered that it was, 'Well,' added he, 'take hold of my stirrup, conduct me thither, and you shall have quarter.' Then turning to me, and making a sign to the soldiers with his hand, he said to me, 'Gentlemen of Magdeburg, you yourselves are the occasion of this destruction: you might have acted otherwise.' The soldier who had used me ill, took this opportunity to steal away. Upon entering my house, we found it filled with a multitude of plunderers, whom the officer, who was a colonel, ordered away. He then said he would take up his lodging with us, and having posted two soldiers for a guard to us, left us with a promise to return forthwith. We gave, with great cheerfulness, a good breakfast to our sentinels, who complimented us on the lucky fortune of falling into their colonel's hands; at the same time representing to us that their fellow-soldiers made a considerable booty while they continued inactive merely as a safe-guard to us, and therefore beseeching us to render them an equivalent to a certain degree. Upon this I gave them four rose-nobles, with which they were well contented, and showed so much humanity as to make us an offer to go and search for any acquaintance whom we desired to place in safety with us. I told them I had one particular friend who had escaped to the cathedral, as I conjectured, and promised them a good gratuity on his part if they saved his life. One of them accompanied by my maid-servant went to the church, and called my friend often by name; but it was all in

vain, no one answered, and we never heard mention of him from that period.

“ Some moments after our colonel returned, and asked if any person had offered us the least incivility. After we had disculpated the soldiers in this respect, he hastened abroad to see if there was any possibility to extinguish the fire, which had already seized great part of the city : he had hardly got into the street, when he returned, with uncommon hastiness, and said, ‘ Show me the way out of the town, for I see plainly we shall perish in the flames if we stay here a few minutes longer.’ Upon this we threw the best of our goods and moveables into a vaulted cellar, covered the trap-door with earth, and made our escape. My wife took nothing with her but my robe ; my maid seized a neighbour’s infant child by the hand, whom we found crying at his father’s door, and led him away. We found it impossible to pass through the gates of the town, which were all in a flame, and the streets burnt with great fury on either side : in a word, the heat was so intense that it was with difficulty we were able to breathe. Having made several unsuccessful attempts, we determined at last to make our escape on the side of the town next the Elbe. The streets were clogged with dead bodies, and the groans of the dying were insupportable. The Walloons and Croats attacked us every moment, but our generous colonel protected us from their fury. When we gained the bastion, which stands on the bank of the Elbe, we descended it by the scaling-ladders which the Imperialists had made use of in the assault, and arrived at length in the enemy’s camp near Rottensee, thoroughly fatigued and extremely alarmed.

“ The colonel made us enter his tent, and presented us some refreshments. That ceremony being over, ‘ Well,’ said he, ‘ having saved your lives, what return do you make me ?’ We told him that for the present we had nothing to bestow, but that we would transfer to him all the money and plate that we had buried in the cellar, which was the whole of our worldly possessions.

At this instant many Imperial officers came in, and one chanced to say to me, 'Ego tibi condoleo, ego sum addictus Fidei Augustanæ.' The distressed state I found myself in made me unable to give a proper reply to the condolences of a man who carried arms against those whose religion he professed, and whose hard fortune he pretended to deplore.

"Next day the colonel sent one of his domestics with my maid-servant to search for the treasure we had buried in the cellar, but they returned without success, because as the fire still continued they could not approach the trap-door. In the mean while the colonel made us his guests at his own table, and during our whole stay treated us not as prisoners, but as intimate friends.

"One day at dinner an officer of the company happened to say, that our sins were the cause of all the evil we suffered, and that God had made use of the Catholic army to chastise us; to whom my wife replied, that the observation perhaps was but too true; however, take care, continued she, lest God in the end should throw that very scourge into the flames. This sort of prophecy was fulfilled soon afterwards on the self-same Imperial army, which was almost totally destroyed at the battle of Leipzig.

"At length I ventured one day to ask our colonel to give us leave to depart: he complied immediately, on condition that we paid our ransom. Next morning I sent my maid into the town to try if there was any possibility of penetrating into the cellar: she was more fortunate that day, and returned with all our wealth. Having returned our thanks to our deliverer, he immediately ordered a passport to be prepared for us, with permission to retire to whatever place we should think proper, and made us a present of a crown to defray the expense of our journey. This brave Spaniard was colonel of the regiment of Savelli, and named Don Joseph de Ainsa."*

The sack of Magdeburg was an event of uncommon atrocity, and abhorred as such even in that age. But

* Harte's Life of Gustavus Adolphus.

from the sort of clemency experienced by this clergyman, who was plundered of his goods after having nearly lost his life, and yet seems to feel much gratitude to his protector, we may imagine the treatment which the peasantry and citizens received from the rude soldiery of that time. These men, both officers and soldiers, were in a great degree mercenaries, who resorted to the wars expressly to mend their fortunes, and were not likely to exercise the presumed rights of the victor with much moderation. Few of their generals had much sympathy with the sufferings of non-combatants, of peaceable countrymen, and wealthy burghers; and those who might have been inclined to enforce discipline and soften the evils of war, were shackled by the deficiency of financial resources, and the consequent irregularity in issuing pay and other requisites to their armies. "There are things, my lord, in the service of that great prince (Gustavus Adolphus) that cannot but go against the stomach of any cavalier of honour. In especial, albeit the pay be none of the most superabundant, being only about sixty rix-dollars a month to a captain; yet the invincible Gustavus never paid above one-third of that sum, which was distributed monthly by way of loan, although when justly considered it was in fact a borrowing by that great monarch of the additional two-thirds, which were due to the soldier."

"But were not these arrears," said Lord Monteith, "paid to the soldiery at some stated period?" "My lord," said Dalgetty, "I take it upon my conscience that at no period, and by no possible process, could one creutzer of them ever be recovered. I myself never saw twenty dollars of my own all the time I served the invincible Gustavus, unless it was from the chance of a storm or victory, or the fetching in of some town or doorp, when a cavalier of fortune who knows the usage of wars, seldom faileth to make some small profit."

"I begin rather to wonder, sir," said Lord Monteith, "that you should have continued so long in the Swedish service, than that you should have ultimately withdrawn from it."

"Neither should I," answered the captain, "but that great leader, captain and king, the Lion of the North, and bulwark of the Protestant faith, had a way of winning battles, taking towns, over-running countries, and levying contributions, whilk made his service irresistibly delectable to all true-bred cavaliers who follow the noble profession of arms. Simple as I ride here, my lord, I have myself commanded the whole stift of Dunklespiel on the Lower Rhine, occupying the Palsgrave's palace, consuming his choice wines with my comrades, calling in contributions, requisitions, and caduacs, and failing not to lick my fingers as became a good cook. But truly all this glory hastened to decay after our great master had been shot with three bullets, upon the field of Lutzen; wherefore, finding that fortune had changed sides, that the borrowings and lendings went on as before out of our pay, while the caduacs and casualties were all cut off, I e'en gave up my commission, and took service with Wallenstein in Walter Butler's Irish regiment."

"And may I beg to know of you," said Lord Monteith, "how you liked this change of masters?"

"Indifferent well," said the captain, "very indifferent well. I cannot say that the Emperor paid much better than the great Gustavus. For hard knocks, we had plenty of them. * * * Howbeit, in despite of heavy blows and light pay, a cavalier of fortune may thrive indifferently well in the Imperial service, in respect his private casualties are nothing so closely looked to as by the Swede; and so that an officer did his duty on the field, neither Wallenstein nor Pappenheim, nor old Tilly before them, would likely listen to the objurgations of boors or burghers against any commander or soldado by whom they chanced to be somewhat closely shorn. So that an experienced cavalier, 'knowing how to lay,' as our Scottish phrase runs, 'the head of the sow to the tail of the grice,' might get out of the country the pay which he could not obtain from the Emperor."

"With a full hand, sir, doubtless, and with interest," said Lord Monteith.

"Indubitably, my lord," answered Dalgetty, composedly ; " for it would be doubly disgraceful for any soldado of rank to have his name called in question for any petty delinquency."*

We do not quote the great romancer as historical authority ; but there is no doubt but that Captain Dalgetty, though perhaps highly coloured, is no unfaithful likeness of those needy and profligate adventurers who bartered blood for gold, and formed a large portion of the armies of the age, indifferent on which side they fought, and constant only while pay, plunder, or promotion were at hand to reward their services.

The other narrative is that of a fisherman, a child at the time of this event, who is said to have survived it nearly ninety years.

"The 10th. of May, early in the morning, at the time the master of our school was reading prayers, a report flew through the streets that the town was taken, which was confirmed by the ringing of the alarm bells. Our master dismissed us all in a moment, saying, 'My dear children, hasten to your homes, and recommend yourselves to the protection of God ; for it is highly probable we shall meet no more except in heaven.' In an instant we all disappeared, some one way, and some another. For my own part, I took my course with speed along the high street ; and found where the public steelyards are (and where the grand guard of the city was kept), a considerable body of troops with their swords drawn ; and saw near them, and at a distance round them, a great number of soldiers stretched dead upon the pavement. Terrified with so melancholy a sight, I shaped my course down the street called Pelican, with a view to conceal myself in my father's house ; but had hardly advanced a few steps, before I fell in with a band of soldiers who had that moment murdered a man whom I saw weltering in his blood. This sight shocked me to such a degree, that I had not power to move forwards ; but sheltering myself in a house opposite to the Pelican

* Legend of Montrose, chap. ii.

ian, found a kind-speaking middle-aged man, who said to me, 'Child, why comest thou hither? save thyself before the soldiers seize thee.' I was strongly tempted to put his advice in practice; but in that moment a party of Croats rushed in, and holding a sabre to his throat, demanded his wealth. The old man immediately opened a coffer to them, full of gold and silver, and precious stones. They crammed their pockets with his riches; yet as the coffer was not emptied, they filled a small basket with the part that remained, and then shot the poor old man through the head. I stole away behind them, and found a place of safety among some empty casks, and there found a young lady, perfectly handsome, who conjured me to remove and make no mention of her. Anxiously reflecting where to dispose of myself, the same Croats surprised me again, and one of them said, 'Bastardly dog, carry this basket for us.' I took it up immediately, and followed them wherever they went. They entered several cellars, and rifled women, maidens, and all persons that fell into their hands, without remorse. As we ascended from one of these cellars, we saw with astonishment that the flames had seized upon the whole fore part of the house. We rushed through the fire, and saved ourselves. In all probability, every soul was destroyed that remained within doors. As for my father, mother, and relations, I never heard a syllable concerning them from that time to the present."*

This last sentence expresses briefly and emphatically the fate of the population. The whole town was burnt, except the cathedral, the convent of Notre Dame, with a few houses about it, and about a hundred and thirty fishermen's cottages on the banks of the Elbe. The number of the slain cannot be distinctly ascertained, for we have no certain knowledge of the population of the city; but the slaughter seems to have been almost universal. It is said, however, that according to the computation of those who were appointed to clear the streets, 6440 bodies were thrown into the Elbe; and

* Harte's Life of Gustavus Adolphus.

this does not include those, probably much the greater number, who were massacred in their houses, and buried under the ruins, or consumed in the general conflagration. One author says that 30,000 persons perished; Harte, that of 40,000 inhabitants, scarce 800 it was thought escaped: but contemporary authors vary in their numbers, which indeed in these cases can hardly ever be ascertained with certainty. The only lives expressly said to have been preserved, are those of 400 persons who took refuge in the cathedral; and in the *Florus Germanicus*, published only ten years later! (a book written in the Imperial interest), it is asserted that none other were spared, and these only from respect to the sanctity of the place. The author, however, reduces their number to a hundred. Others must have been saved, like those whose narratives are given above, by chance, or individual compassion; but it is plain that indiscriminate destruction was the order of the day. This massacre will be an everlasting blot upon Tilly's reputation. He remained without the town; and when solicited by those who had witnessed the horrors acted within, to stop the indiscriminate slaughter, he replied, "The town must bleed; it has not yet made sufficient expiation. Let the soldiers persist another hour, and then we will reconsider the matter." According to another story, he said that the soldiers must have some recompense for so much time and trouble. Yet, say the historians of his own party, when on the third day he rode over the crackling ashes, and through piles of corpses, he wept as he quoted some lines of Virgil, relative to the destruction of Troy.*

There was no want of prodigies to foretell the fate of Magdeburg, by monstrous births, the fall of towers, and other circumstances of equal moment; several of which

* Venit summa dies, et inevitabile fatum,
 ————— fuit Ilium, et ingens

Gloria Parthenopes.

Parthenopes, substituted by the quoter for the original word Teucrorum, has the same meaning as Magdeburg, the maiden city.

the curious reader will find mentioned by Harte, and many more minutely described by Lotichius, as above quoted. Such follies must have been deeply implanted in men's minds when a Christian writer, in the seventeenth century, has thought it worth while to corroborate one of these omens by quoting a similar one from Valerius Maximus.

The engineer's art has materially diminished the interest of modern sieges, by reducing them, independent of external relief, almost to certainty, and substituting the combinations of science for the personal exertions of the soldier. The warfare of trenches and batteries, by which outwork after outwork is rendered untenable, often without a bayonet being crossed in their defence, fails to rivet the attention, and indeed is scarce intelligible without some share of professional knowledge. It is not until the cannon have done their work, and opened a way to individual strength and courage, not until the assaulting columns are ready to ascend the breach, that the deep interest is roused which even against our better judgment attends on military daring. Still, after giving so many various specimens of this branch of warfare, it may naturally be supposed that we shall not pass in silence over all the brilliant actions of our own time: and the attention is at once directed to the Peninsular war, not only as the field in which the military energy of our empire was most successfully developed, but because it produced a great number of sieges of remarkable interest; while not one such occurs in the campaigns which Napoleon conducted in person. A volume of sieges might be compiled from this war, illustrative both of military resolution and of popular energy and desperation: no wonder then if we have hesitated between the contending claims of Zaragoza and Gerona. The latter city is the favourite of Colonel Napier, who cites its resistance to prove how far the regulated warfare of a disciplined force is superior to the enthusiasm of a population untrained to arms. The grounds of his preference are briefly these. Zaragoza was manned by above 30,000 soldiers and 25,000 armed

PLAN OF ZARAGOZA.—(Copied by permission from Napier's History of the Peninsular War.)



1. St. Engracia. 2. Mad-house. 3. Convent of St. Francisca. 4. St. Monica. 5. St. Augustin. 6. University. 7. Convent of Jesus. 8. Mines. 9. St. Lazar. The dotted portion shows how much of the city was gained by the French during the second siege.

citizens and peasants ; but she wanted heavy artillery, regular fortifications, and a controlling spirit : for both the reputation and authority of Palafox appear to have been nominal, and it is to the influence of plebeian leaders that the ferocious energy of the defence is to be ascribed. Gerona contained about 3000 regular troops, and less than 6000 armed citizens ; but she was well fortified, and commanded by an experienced and resolute officer. With this inferior force she held out twice as long as Zaragoza against a superior attacking army, conducted the defence in regular military order, and kept the enemy without her defences, instead of admitting him to wage a desperate struggle on her hearthstones and in her churches. On these grounds the defenders of Gerona may merit the preference assigned to them by Colonel Napier for having displayed equal bravery and devotion, with better fortune or greater skill. Still the irregular and desperate struggle in the streets of Zaragoza, where every house was a fortress, the end of every street a battery, where miner counterplotted miner, and every foot of ground was purchased by blood and ruin, will win the attention of more readers than would the systematic warfare carried on under the walls of Gerona.

Zaragoza is situated on the right bank of the Ebro. Before its first siege, in 1808, it contained 50,000 inhabitants. It possessed no regular defences, and few guns fit for service, but was surrounded by a low brick wall. These deficiencies were in some degree remedied by the nature of its buildings, which were well calculated for the internal warfare subsequently carried on : the houses being mostly built of brick and stone, and vaulted, so as to be almost incombustible. The city was also full of churches and convents, strongly built, and surrounded by high thick walls. A broad street, called the Cosso, bent almost into a semicircle, concentric with the wall, and terminated at each end by the Ebro, divided the city into an outer and an inner part. It occupied the ground on which the Moorish walls had formerly stood, before the city attained its present size. This street was the scene of that heroic resistance in

1808, which kept the French at bay after the walls and one-half of the place had fallen into their hands. On the 3rd of August, rather more than a month after the commencement of the siege, the convent of St. Engracia, which formed part of the wall, was breached; and on the 4th it was stormed, and the victorious troops carried all before them as far as the Cosso, and before night were in possession of one-half of the city. The French general now considered the city as his own, and summoned it to surrender in a note containing only these words: "Head-quarters, St. Engracia: Capitulation." The emphatic reply is well-known, and will become proverbial: "Head-quarters, Zaragoza: War to the knife."

"The contest which was now carried on is unexampled in history. One side of the Cosso, a street about as wide as Pall-Mall, was possessed by the French, and in the centre of it their general, Verdier, gave his orders from the Franciscan convent. The opposite side was maintained by the Arragonese, who threw up batteries at the openings of the cross-streets, within a few paces of those which the French erected against them. The intervening space was presently heaped with dead, either slain upon the spot, or thrown out from the windows. Next day, the ammunition of the citizens began to fail: the French were expected every moment to renew their efforts for completing the conquest, and even this circumstance occasioned no dismay, nor did any one think of capitulation. One cry was heard from the people, whenever Palafox rode amongst them, that if powder failed, they were ready to attack the enemy with their knives—formidable weapons in the hands of desperate men. Just before the day closed, Don Francisco Palafox, the general's brother, entered the city with a convoy of arms and ammunition, and a reinforcement of 3000 men, composed of Spanish guards, Swiss, and volunteers of Arragon: a succour as little expected by the Zaragozans, as it had been provided against by the enemy.

"The war was now continued from street to street,

from house to house, and from room to room ; pride and indignation having wrought up the French to a pitch of obstinate fury, little inferior to the devoted courage of the patriots. During the whole siege no man distinguished himself more remarkably than the curate of one of the parishes within the walls, by name P. Santiago Suss. He was always to be seen in the streets, sometimes fighting with the most determined bravery, at other times administering the sacrament to the dying, and confirming with the authority of faith that hope, which gives to death, under such circumstances, the joy, the exaltation, the triumph, and the spirit of martyrdom. Palafox reposed the utmost confidence in the brave priest, and selected him when anything peculiarly difficult or hazardous was to be done. At the head of forty chosen men he succeeded in introducing into the town a supply of powder so essentially necessary for its defence.

“ This most obstinate and murderous conflict was continued for eleven successive days and nights, more indeed by night than by day ; for it was almost certain death to appear by daylight within reach of those houses which were occupied by the other party. But under cover of the darkness, the combatants frequently dashed across the street to attack each other's batteries ; and the battles which began there were often carried on into the houses beyond, where they fought from room to room, and from floor to floor. The hostile batteries were so near each other, that a Spaniard in one place made way under cover of the dead bodies which completely filled the space between them, and fastened a rope to one of the French cannons ; in the struggle which ensued the rope broke, and the Zaragozans lost their prize at the very moment when they thought themselves sure of it.

“ A new horror was added to the dreadful circumstances of war in this ever memorable siege. In general engagements the dead are left upon the field of battle, and the survivors removed to clear ground and an untainted atmosphere ; but here, in Spain, and in the month

of August, there where the dead lay the struggle was still carried on, and pestilence was dreaded from the enormous accumulation of putrefying bodies. Nothing in the whole course of the siege so much embarrassed Palafox as this evil. The only remedy was to tie ropes to the French prisoners, and push them forward amid the dead and dying, to remove the bodies and bring them away for interment. Even for this necessary office there was no truce, and it would have been certain death to the Arragonese who should have attempted to perform it: but the prisoners were in general secured by the pity of their own soldiers, and in this manner the evil was in some degree diminished.

"A council of war was held by the Spaniards on the 8th, not for the purpose which is too usual in such councils, but that their heroic resolution might be communicated to the people. It was, that in those quarters of the city where the Arragonese still maintained their ground, they should continue to defend themselves with the same firmness: should the enemy at last prevail, they were then to retire over the Ebro into the suburbs, break down the bridge, and defend the suburbs till they perished. When this resolution was made public, it was received with the loudest acclamations. But in every conflict the citizens now gained ground upon the soldiers, winning it inch by inch, till the space occupied by the enemy, which on the day of their entrance was nearly half the city, was reduced gradually to about an eighth part. Meantime intelligence of the events in other parts of Spain was received by the French, all tending to dishearten them. During the night of the 13th, their fire was particularly fierce and destructive: in the morning, the French columns, to the great surprise of the Spaniards, were seen at a distance retreating over the plain, on the road to Pampeluna."*

Zaragoza, however, was a place of too much importance long to enjoy in quiet her hard-earned laurels. In the course of the autumn, the French recovered their

* Southey, Hist. Peninsular War, chap. ix.

superiority in Arragon, and had no sooner done so, than they bent their strength to repair the disgrace which their arms had sustained, and overthrow the firmest bulwark of independence in the western provinces of Spain. The inhabitants, aware that their heroic resistance had purchased only a temporary deliverance, employed the intervening time in repairing and improving their external defences, and still more so in preparing to renew to greater advantage that internal conflict, in which experience had shown their real strength to exist.

“It has already been observed, that the houses of Zaragoza were fire-proof, and generally of only two stories, and that in all the quarters of the city the numerous and massive convents and churches rose like castles above the low buildings, and that the greater streets running into the Broadway, called the Cosso, divided the town into a variety of districts, unequal in size, but each containing one or more large structures. Now the citizens, sacrificing all personal convenience, and resigning all idea of private property, gave up their goods, their bodies, and their houses to the war; and being promiscuously mingled with the peasantry and the regular soldiers, the whole formed one mighty garrison, well suited to the vast fortress into which Zaragoza was transformed: for the doors and windows of the houses were built up, and their fronts loop-holed; internal communications were broken through the party-walls, and the streets were trenched and crossed by earthen ramparts mounted with cannon, and every strong building was turned into a separate fortification. There was no weak point, because there could be none in a town which was all fortress, and where the space covered by the city was the measurement for the thickness of the ramparts; nor in this emergency were the leaders unmindful of moral force.

“The people were cheered by a constant reference to their former successful resistance; their confidence was raised by the contemplation of the vast works that had been executed; and it was recalled to their recollection that the wet, usual at that season of the year, would

spread disease among the enemy's ranks, and impair, if not entirely frustrate, his efforts. Neither was the aid of superstition neglected: processions imposed upon the sight, false miracles bewildered the imagination, and terrible denunciations of divine wrath shook the minds of men whose former habits and present situation rendered them peculiarly susceptible of such impressions. Finally, the leaders were themselves so prompt and terrible in their punishments, that the greatest cowards were likely to show the boldest bearing, in their wish to escape suspicion.

"To avoid the danger of any great explosion, the powder was made as occasion required; and this was the more easily effected, because Zaragoza contained a royal depôt and refinery for saltpetre, and there were powder-mills in the neighbourhood, which furnished workmen familiar with the process of manufacturing that article. The houses and trees beyond the walls were all demolished and cut down, and the materials carried into the town. The public magazines contained six months' provisions; the convents were well stocked; and the inhabitants had likewise laid up their own stores for several months. General Doyle had also sent a convoy into the town from the side of Catalonia, and there was abundance of money, because, in addition to the resources of the town, the military chest of Castaños's army, which had been supplied only the night before the battle of Tudela, had been in the flight carried into the town.

"Companies of women, enrolled to attend the hospitals, and to carry provisions and ammunition to the combatants, were commanded by the Countess Burita, a lady of an heroic disposition, who is said to have displayed the greatest intelligence and the noblest character during both sieges. There were thirteen engineer officers, and 800 sappers and miners, composed of excavators, formerly employed on the canal, and there were from 1500 to 2000 cannoneers.

"The regular troops that fled from Tudela being joined by two small divisions which retreated at the same time from Sanguessa and Caparosa, formed a gar-

rison of 30,000 men, and together with the inhabitants and peasantry presented a mass of 50,000 combatants; who with passions excited almost to frenzy awaited an assault amidst those mighty entrenchments, where each man's home was a fortress and his family a garrison. To besiege with only 35,000 men a city so prepared was truly a gigantic undertaking."*

It was on December 20, 1808, that Marshals Moncey and Mortier appeared in front of the town. We pass over the early part of the siege, which contains nothing to distinguish it from a multitude of others. The French, supported by a powerful battering and mortar train, advanced their trenches slowly towards the town until January 22, when Marshal Lasnes arrived to assume the command. On the 29th four breaches were declared practicable. That night four columns rushed to the assault; one was repulsed, the other three established themselves, and the ramparts of the city became the front line of the French trenches.

"The walls of Zaragoza thus went to the ground, but Zaragoza herself remained erect; and as the broken girdle fell from the heroic city, the besiegers started at the view of her naked strength. The regular defences had indeed crumbled before the skill of the assailants, but the popular resistance was immediately called with its terrors into action. * * * The war being now carried into the streets of Zaragoza, the sound of the alarm-bell was heard over all the quarters of the city, and the people assembling in crowds, filled the houses nearest to the lodgments made by the French. Additional traverses and barricadoes were constructed across the principal streets; mines were prepared in the more open spaces; and the communications from house to house were multiplied, until they formed a vast labyrinth of which the intricate windings were only to be traced by the weapons and the dead bodies of the defenders. The members of the junta, become more powerful from the cessation of regular warfare, with redoubled activity and

* Napier's History of the Peninsular War, book v. chap. 2.

energy urged the defence, but increased the horrors of the siege by a ferocity pushed to the very verge of frenzy. Every person, without regard to rank or age, who excited the suspicion of these furious men, or those immediately about them, was instantly put to death; and amid the noble bulwarks of war a horrid array of gibbets was to be seen, on which crowds of wretches were suspended each night, because their courage had sunk beneath the accumulating dangers of their situation, or because some doubtful expression or gesture of distress had been misconstrued by their barbarous chiefs.

“From the heights of the walls which he had conquered, Marshal Lasnes contemplated this terrific scene; and judging that men so passionate and so prepared could not be prudently encountered in open battle, he resolved to proceed by the slow but certain progress of the mattock and the mine; and this was also in unison with the Emperor's instructions. Hence from the 29th of January to the 2d February, the efforts of the French were directed to the enlargement of their lodgment on the walls; and they succeeded after much severe fighting and several explosions in working forward through the nearest houses, but at the same time they had to sustain many counter-assaults from the Spaniards.

“It has been already observed that the crossing of the large streets divided the town into certain small districts or islands of houses. To gain possession of these, it was necessary not only to mine but to fight for each house. To cross the large intersecting streets it was indispensable to construct traverses above or to work by underground galleries, because a battery raked each street, and each house was defended by a garrison that, generally speaking, had only the option of repelling the enemy in front, or dying on the gibbet erected behind. But as long as the convents and churches remained in possession of the Spaniards, the progress of the French among the islands of small houses was of little advantage to them, because the large garrisons in the greater buildings enabled the defenders not only to make continual and successful sallies, but also to countermine their ene-

mies, whose superior skill in that kind of warfare was often frustrated by the numbers and persevering energy of the besieged. * * *

"The experience of these attacks* induced a change in the mode of fighting on both sides. Hitherto the play of the French mines had reduced the houses to ruins, and thus the soldiers were exposed completely to the fire from the next Spanish posts. The engineers therefore diminished the quantity of powder, that the interior only might fall, and the outward walls stand, and this method was found successful. Hereupon the Spaniards, with ready ingenuity, saturated the timbers and planks of the houses with rosin and pitch, and setting fire to those which could no longer be maintained, interposed a burning barrier which often delayed the assailants for two days, and always prevented them from pushing their successes during the confusion that necessarily followed the bursting of the mines. The fighting was however incessant, a constant bombardment, the explosion of mines, the crash of falling buildings, clamorous shouts, and the continued echo of musketry deafened the ear, while volumes of smoke and dust clouded the atmosphere, and lowered continually over the heads of the combatants, as hour by hour the French with a terrible perseverance pushed forwards their approaches to the heart of the miserable but glorious city.

"Their efforts were chiefly directed against two points, namely, that of San Engracia, which may be denominated the left attack, and that of St. Augustin and St. Monica, which constituted the right attack. At San Engracia they laboured on a line perpendicular to the Cosso, from which they were separated only by the large convent of the daughters of Jerusalem, and by the hospital for madmen, which was entrenched, although in ruins since the first siege. The line of this attack was protected on the left by the convent of the Capuchins,

* Attempts made by the French to force their way into the centre of the city from January 29th to February 2d.

which General Lacoste had fortified to repel the counter-assaults of the Spaniards. The right attack was more diffused, because the localities presented less prominent features to determine the direction of the approaches; and the French, having mounted a number of light six-inch mortars on peculiar carriages, drew them from street to street, and from house to house, as occasion offered. On the other hand, the Spaniards continually plied their enemies with hand-grenades, which seem to have produced a surprising effect, and in this manner the never-ceasing combat was prolonged until the 7th of February, when the besiegers, by dint of alternate mines and assaults, had worked their perilous way at either attack to the Cosso, but not without several changes of fortune and considerable loss. They were, however, unable to obtain a footing on that public walk, for the Spaniards still disputed every house with undiminished resolution.

“The 8th, 9th, and 10th were wasted by the besiegers in vain attempts to pass the Cosso; they then extended their flanks. * * * The 11th and 12th, mines were worked under the University, a large building on the Spanish side of the Cosso, in the line of the right attack; but their play was insufficient to open the walls, and the storming party was beaten with the loss of fifty men. Nevertheless, the besiegers continuing their labours during the 13th, 14th, 15th, 16th, and 17th, passed the Cosso by means of traverses, and prepared fresh mines under the University, but deferred their explosion until a simultaneous effort could be combined on the side of the suburb.

“At the left attack also a number of houses bordering on the Cosso being gained, a battery was established that raked that great thoroughfare above ground; while under it, six galleries were carried, and six mines loaded to explode at the same moment; but the spirit of the French army was now exhausted; they had laboured and fought without intermission for fifty days; they had crumbled the walls with their bullets, burst the convents with their mines, and carried the walls with their

bayonets. Fighting above and beneath the surface of the earth, they had spared neither fire nor the sword; their bravest men were falling in the obscurity of a subterranean warfare; famine pinched them, and Zaragoza was still unconquered!

“ ‘Before this siege,’ they exclaimed, ‘was it ever heard that 20,000 men should besiege 50,000?’ Scarcely a fourth of the town was won, and they themselves were already exhausted. ‘We must wait,’ they said, ‘for reinforcements, or we shall all perish among these cursed ruins, which will become our own tombs before we can force the last of these fanatics from the last of their dens.’

“ Marshal Lasnes, unshaken by these murmurs and obstinate to conquer, endeavoured to raise the soldiers’ hopes. He pointed out to them that the losses of the besieged so far exceeded their own, that the Spaniards’ strength must soon be wasted, and their courage must sink, and that the fierceness of their defence was already abated; but if, contrary to expectation, they should renew the example of Numantia, their utter destruction must quickly ensue from the combined effects of battle, misery, and pestilence.

“ These exhortations succeeded, and on the 18th, all the combinations being complete, a general assault took place. The French at the right attack having opened a party wall by the explosion of a petard, made a sudden rush through some burning ruins, and carried without a check the island of houses leading down to the quay, with the exception of two buildings. The Spaniards were thus forced to abandon all the external fortifications between St. Augustin and the Ebro, which they had preserved until that day. And while this assault was in progress, the mines under the university, containing 3000 pounds of powder, were sprung; and the walls tumbling with a terrific crash, a column of the besiegers entered the place, and after one repulse secured a lodgment. During this time fifty pieces of artillery thundered upon the suburb, and ploughed up the bridge over the Ebro, and by mid-day opened a practicable breach in the

great convent of St. Lazar, which was the principal defence on that side. Lasnes, observing that the Spaniards seemed to be shaken by this overwhelming fire, immediately ordered an assault, and St. Lazar being carried forthwith, all retreat to the bridge was thus intercepted, and the besieged falling into confusion, and their commander, Baron Versage, being killed, were all destroyed or taken, with the exception of two or three hundred men, who, braving the terrible fire to which they were exposed, got back into the town. General Gazan immediately occupied the abandoned works, and having thus cut off above 2000 men that were stationed on the Ebro, above the suburb, forced them also to surrender.

"This important success being followed on the 19th by another fortunate attack on the right bank of the Ebro, and by the devastating explosion of 1600 pounds of powder, the constancy of the besieged was at last shaken. An aide-de-camp of Palafox came forth to demand certain terms, before offered by the Marshal, adding thereto that the garrison should be allowed to join the Spanish armies, and that a certain number of covered carriages should follow them. Lasnes rejected these proposals, and the fire continued; but the hour of surrender was come. Fifty pieces of artillery, on the left bank of the Ebro, laid the houses on the quay in ruins. The church of Our Lady of the Pillar, under whose especial protection the city was supposed to exist, was nearly effaced by the bombardment; and the six mines under the Cosso, loaded with many thousand pounds of powder, were ready for a simultaneous explosion, which would have laid a quarter of the remaining houses in the dust. In fine, war had done its work, and the misery of Zaragoza could no longer be endured.

"The bombardment, which had never ceased from the 10th of January, had forced the women and children to take refuge in the vaults, with which the city abounded. There the constant combustion of oil, the closeness of the atmosphere, unusual diet, and fear and restlessness of mind, had combined to produce a pesti-

lence, which soon spread to the garrison. The strong and weak, the daring soldier and the timid child, fell before it alike ; and such was the state of the atmosphere, and the disposition to disease, that the slightest wound gangrened and became incurable. In the beginning of February the deaths were from four to five hundred daily ; the living were unable to bury the dead, and thousands of carcases scattered about the streets and court-yards, or piled in heaps at the doors of the churches, were left to dissolve in their own corruption, or to be licked up by the flames of the burning houses as the defence became contracted.

“ The suburb, the greatest part of the walls, and one-fourth of the houses were in the hands of the French ; 16,000 shells thrown during the bombardment, and the explosion of 45,000 pounds of powder in the mines, had shaken the city to its foundations, and the bones of more than 40,000 persons of every age and sex bore dreadful testimony to the constancy of the besieged.

“ Palafox was sick ; and of the plebeian chiefs, the most distinguished having been slain in battle, or swept away by the pestilence, the obdurate violence of the remaining leaders was so abated that a fresh junta was formed ; and, after a stormy consultation, the majority being for a surrender, a deputation waited on Marshal Lasnes on the 20th of February to negotiate a capitulation.”*

Some doubt exists as to the terms obtained ; the French writers assert that the place surrendered at discretion ; the Spaniards say the following conditions were obtained : that the garrison should march out with the honours of war, to be constituted prisoners and marched to England, the peasants to be sent home, and property of the garrison to be guaranteed. On the 21st, from 12,000 to 15,000 sickly men laid down the arms which they could scarcely support, and this memorable siege was terminated.

* Napier, Hist. of Peninsular War, book v. chap. 3.

CHAPTER XIV.

Corcyrean sedition—Civil wars of Rome—Jacquerie—Factions of the Circus at Constantinople—Massacre of Sept. 2, 1792.

THE year which witnessed the unhappy fate of the brave Plataeans was made remarkable by the Corcyrean sedition also : on which, as on the plague of Athens, the pen of Thucydides has conferred a lasting celebrity.

Corcyra, an island situated on the western coast of Greece, by sedulous attention to commerce, had risen, a little before the Peloponnesian war, to the possession of a navy capable of rivalling in strength that of any Grecian state, except Athens. It was a colony of Corinth ; but, in consequence of some disputes which arose out of the affairs of Epidamnus, a Corcyrean colony, war broke out between Corcyra and the mother country, the Corcyreans concluded a defensive alliance with the Athenians, and the democratical interest was of course established in power. A naval battle ensued, in which the Corinthians had the advantage, and took upwards of a thousand prisoners. It rarely happened in any of the smaller Grecian states, that either the democratic or the oligarchical party obtained an uncontested and permanent ascendancy ; and the Corinthians were not inclined to which without a struggle that respect and influence due from manners and religion of Greece taught to be due from a colony to the mother country. Of the prisoners at mentioned, eight hundred, who were slaves, were sold by the victors ; the rest, to the number of two hundred and fifty were citizens, most of them men of consequence in Corcyra, who probably looked with no friendly eye on the Athenian alliance, and at all events were ready to break it off and revert to the con-

nexion of Corinth, as the price of their liberty. They were accordingly suffered to return home. The tumults to which their subsequent attempts to restore the oligarchy gave rise are celebrated in history under the name of the Corcyrean sedition. A more heinous scene of treachery and murder has seldom been exhibited even in civil warfare; or a more deplorable state of morals described than that which is said by Thucydides in the following passage to have prevailed, not only in Corcyra, but throughout Greece.

“The sedition in Corcyra began upon the coming home of those captives which were taken in the battles by sea at Epidamnus, and released afterwards by the Corinthians at the ransom, as was voiced, of eight hundred talents, for which they had given security to their hosts,* but in fact, because they had persuaded the Corinthians that they would put Corcyra into their power. These persons going round from man to man, solicited the city to revolt from the Athenians; and two galleys being now come in, one of Athens, another of Corinth, with ambassadors from both those states, the Corcyreans, upon audience of them both, decreed to

* *Προξένοι*. The want of public houses of entertainment for travellers was necessarily supplied by private hospitality. He whose fortune it was to entertain to-day, of course expected to be entertained in return when he visited the country of his guest; and thus were formed hereditary connexions of hospitality, held no less sacred than the ties of blood. By a natural extension of the practice, cities formed similar connexions with foreign citizens, who received their ambassadors, and advocated as far as in them lay both the public interests of the community, and the private interests of those of its citizens who required such help. These men were named Proxeni; the bond of mutual obligation was publicly recorded, and entitled them to receive as guests the same hospitality and protection which they afforded as hosts. Etheloproxeni, below translated voluntary hosts, assumed the same duties, but voluntarily; without the connexion being publicly acknowledged, and consequently without being entitled to that public return which the Proxenus claimed as his right.

hold the Athenians for their confederates, on articles agreed on : but withal to remain friends to the Peloponnesians, as they had formerly been. There was one Pithias, voluntary host of the Athenians, and that had been principal magistrate of the people. Him these men called into judgment, and laid to his charge a practice to bring the city into the servitude of the Athenians. He again, being acquit, called in question five of the wealthiest of the same men, saying they had cut certain stakes* in the ground belonging to the temples both of Jupiter and of Alcinous, upon every one of which there lay a penalty of a stater.† And being sentenced to pay

* "Probably vine sticks, round which the vines were trained. To understand the account given in the text, we must suppose that the individuals whom Pithias prosecuted were the tenants of the sacred ground from which the sticks were cut, and possibly had inherited the possession of it from their ancestors, so that they regarded it from long use as their own property : just as the Roman aristocracy thought themselves aggrieved when an Agrarian law called on them to resign the possession of the national lands which they had for so many generations appropriated to themselves without any lawful title. As hereditary tenants of the sacred ground, the Corcyrean nobles had probably been always in the habit of treating it as their own : so that when suddenly charged with sacrilege, in abusing their legal rights as tenants, by cutting down the trees, which belonged not to them, but to the god, the owner of the land, they, like the Roman nobility, had no legal defence to make, and could only maintain their encroachments by violence." This is Dr. Arnold's explanation. The Roman aristocracy, however, had a lawful title to the possession, though not to the full property, of the lands in question. See Penny Cyclopædia, art. Agrarian Law. A lease of certain public lands in Attica is preserved in the British Museum (Elgin Marbles, No. 261), in which the devastation of wood is especially forbidden. See Boeckh, Public Economy of Athens, English translation, vol. ii. p. 15. The prosecution and amount of fine were, however, evidently dictated by party spirit and revenge.

† Dr. Arnold supposes the silver stater, or tetradrachm, to be meant, which is worth, in our coin, between three shil-

the fine, they took sanctuary in the temples, to the end, the sum being great, they might pay it by portions, as they should be taxed. But Pithias (for he was also of the senate) obtained that the law should proceed. These five being by the law shut out of hope, and understanding that Pithias, as long as he was a senator, would cause the people to hold for friends and foes the same that were so to the Athenians, conspired with the rest, and armed with daggers, suddenly brake into the senate house, and slew both Pithias and others, as well private men as senators, to the number of about sixty persons; only a few of those of Pithias his faction escaped into the Athenian galley that lay yet in the harbour.

“When they had done this, and called the Corcyreans to an assembly, they told them, that what they had done was for the best, and that they should not be now in bondage to the Athenians. And for the future they advised them to be in quiet, and to receive neither party with more than one galley at once; and to take them for enemies if they were more: and when they had spoken forced them to decree it accordingly. They also presently sent ambassadors to Athens, both to show that it was fit for them to do what they had done, and also to dissuade such Corcyreans as were fled thither of the other faction, from doing anything to their prejudice, lest there should be a counter-revolution.

“When these arrived, the Athenians apprehended both the ambassadors themselves, as seditious persons, and also all those Corcyreans whom they had there prevailed with, and sent them to custody in Ægina. In the mean time, upon the coming in of a galley of Corinth with ambassadors from Lacedæmon, that party that had

lings and three shillings and sixpence; the tetradrachms vary considerably in weight. The golden stater, which was worth twenty drachms, ought therefore to be worth from fifteen shillings to seventeen shillings and sixpence; but a specimen in the British Museum weighs 132½ grains, which is about 9½ grains more than a sovereign. Silver therefore seems to have borne a higher value in relation to gold in Attica than it does in England.

the rule assailed the commons, and overcame them in fight; and night coming on, the commons fled into the citadel, and the higher parts of the city, where they rallied themselves and encamped, and made themselves masters of the haven called the Hillaic haven. But the others seized on the market-place (where also the most of them dwelt) and on the haven on the side toward the continent.

"The next day they skirmished a little with shot,* and both parts sent abroad into the villages to solicit the slaves, with promise of liberty, to take their parts; and the greatest part of the slaves took part with the commons, and the other side had an aid of 800 men from the continent.

"The next day but one they fought again, and the people had the victory, having the odds both in strength of places, and in number of men. And the women also manfully assisted them, throwing tiles from the houses, and enduring the tumult, even beyond the condition of their sex. The few began to fly about twilight, and fearing lest the people should attack, and at the first onset gain possession of the arsenal, and put them to the sword, to stop their passage, set fire to the houses in the market-place, and those adjoining them, sparing neither their own property nor others. Much goods of merchants were hereby burnt, and the whole city, if the wind had risen and carried the flame that way, had been in danger to have been destroyed. Then ceasing from battle, forasmuch as both parties were at rest, they set watch for the night. And the Corinthian galley stole away, because the people had gotten the victory, and most of the auxiliaries got over privily to the continent.

"The next day Nicostratus the son of Diotrephes, an Athenian commander, came in with twelve galleys and five hundred Messenian men of arms from Naupactus, and both negotiated a reconciliation, and induced them (to the end they might agree) to condemn ten of the principal authors of the sedition (who presently fled)

* Arrows, darts, stones, and the like missile weapons.

and to let the rest alone, with articles both between themselves and with the Athenians, to esteem friends and enemies the same as the Athenians did. When he had done this, he would have been gone, but the people persuaded him before he went to leave behind him five of his galleys, the better to keep their adversaries from stirring, and to take as many of theirs, which they would man with Corcyreans, and send with him. To this he agreed, and they made a list of those that should embark, consisting altogether of their enemies. But these fearing to be sent to Athens, took sanctuary in the temple of Castor and Pollux: but Nicostratus endeavoured to raise them, and spake to them, to put them into courage: but when he could not prevail, the people (arming themselves on pretence that their diffidence to go along with Nicostratus proceeded from some evil intention) took away their arms out of their houses, and would also have killed some of them, such as they chanced on, if Nicostratus had not hindered them. Others also, when they saw this, took sanctuary in the temple of Juno, and they were in all above four hundred. But the people, fearing some innovation, got them by persuasion to rise, and conveying them into the island that lieth over against the temple of Juno, sent them their necessaries thither.

“The sedition standing in these terms, the fourth or fifth day after the putting over of these men into the island, arrived the Peloponnesian fleet from Cyllene, where, since their voyage of Ionia, they had lain at anchor, to the number of three and fifty sail. Alcidas had the command of these, as before, and Brasidas came with him as a counsellor. And having first put in at Sybota, a haven of the continent, they came on the next morning by break of day toward Corcyra.

“The Corcyreans being in a great tumult and fear, both of the seditious within, and of the invasion without, made ready threescore galleys, and still as any of them were manned, sent them out against the enemy; whereas the Athenians had advised them to give leave to them to go forth first, and then the Corcyreans to follow after

with the whole fleet together. But when their scattered ships neared the enemy, two of them immediately deserted, and in others they that were aboard went together by the ears, and nothing was done in due order. The Peloponnesians, seeing their confusion, opposed themselves to the Corcyreans with twenty galleys only, the rest they set in array against the twelve galleys of Athens.

“The Corcyreans having come disorderly up, and by few at once, were of their own fault in much distress; but the Athenians, fearing an overmatch of numbers, and that they should be surrounded, did not charge upon the close array, nor on the centre of the enemy; but attacked the wing, and sunk one of their galleys: and when the Peloponnesians afterwards had put their fleet into a circular figure, they then went about and about it, endeavouring to put them into disorder; which they that were fighting against the Corcyreans perceiving, and fearing such another chance as befel them formerly at Naupactus, went to their aid, and uniting themselves, came upon the Athenians all together. But they, backing their oars, retreated with their prows to the enemy, that the Corcyreans should take that time to escape in; they themselves in the mean time going as leisurely back as was possible, and keeping the enemy still opposed to them. Such was this battle, and it ended about sunset.

“The Corcyreans fearing lest the enemy, in pursuit of their victory, should have come directly against the city, or take aboard the men which they had put over into the island, or do them some other mischief, fetched back the men into the temple of Juno again, and guarded the city. But the Peloponnesians, though they had won the battle, yet durst not invade the city, but having taken thirteen of the Corcyrean galleys, went back into the continent from whence they had set forth. The next day they came not unto the city, no more than before, although it was in great tumult and affright: and though also Brasidas (as it is reported)

advised Alcidas to it, but had not equal authority: but only landed soldiers at the promontory of Leucimna, and wasted their territory.

“ In the mean time the people of Corcyra, fearing extremely lest those galleys should come against the city, not only conferred with those in sanctuary, and with the rest, about how the city might be preserved, but also induced some of them to serve on shipboard. For notwithstanding the confusion they had still manned thirty galleys, in expectation that the fleet of the enemy should have entered. But the Peloponnesians having been wasting of their fields till it was about noon, went their ways again. And during the night the Corcyreans had notice by beacon-fires of threescore Athenian galleys coming toward them from Leucas, which the Athenians, upon intelligence of the sedition, and of the fleet to go to Corcyra under Alcidas, had sent to aid them, under the conduct of Eurymedon the son of Thucles.

“ The Peloponnesians, therefore, as soon as night came, sailed speedily home, keeping still the shore, and causing their galleys to be carried over at the Isthmus of Leucas, that they might not come in sight as they doubled it. But the people of Corcyra, hearing of the Attic galleys coming in, and the going off of the Peloponnesians, brought into the city the Messenians,* who till this time had been kept outside the walls, and appointing the galleys which they had equipped to come about into the Hillaic haven; they in the mean time slew all the contrary faction they could lay hands on, and also afterwards threw overboard out of the same galleys all those (i. e., of the oligarchical party) they had before persuaded to embark, and so went thence. And coming to the temple of Juno, they persuaded fifty of those that had taken sanctuary, to refer themselves to a legal trial; all which they condemned to die. But most of those who had taken sanctuary, that is, all those that were not induced to stand to trial by law, when they saw what was done, killed one another there, right

* That came with Nicostratus.

in the temple : some hanged themselves on trees ; every one, as he had means, made himself away. And for seven days together that Eurymedon staid there with his threescore galleys, the Corcyreans did nothing but kill such of their city as they took to be their enemies, laying to their charge indeed that they had conspired against the commons, but some among them were slain upon private hatred, and some by their debtors, for the money which they had lent them. All forms of death were then seen, and (as in such cases it usually falls out) whatsoever had happened at any time, happened also then, and more. For the father slew his son, men were dragged out of the temples, and then slain hard by ; and some walled up within the temple of Bacchus* died there. So cruel was this sedition ; and it seemed so the more, because it was among these men the first.

“ For afterwards all Greece, as a man may say, was in commotion ; and quarrels arose every where between the patrons of the commons, that sought to bring in the Athenians, and the Few† that desired to bring in the Lacedæmonians. Now in time of peace they could have no pretence, nor would have been so forward to call them in ; but being war, and confederates to be had for either party, both to hurt their enemies, and strengthen themselves, such as desired alteration easily got foreign help to their end. And many heinous things happened in the cities through this sedition, which though they have been before, and shall be ever, as long as human

* The Greeks had rather singular notions as to the sanctity of temples. To kill a person within the sacred precincts, or to drag him away violently, was held sacrilegious ; but to wall a suppliant up, and thus preventing his escape to starve him to death, seems to have been considered venial, since this mode of proceeding was adopted, in a former instance, against the king of Sparta, Pausanias. In the latter case, however, the Delphic oracle pronounced the act a pollution, and ordered that amends should be made for it to the goddess whose temple was thus desecrated. See Thucyd. i. 134.

† τοῖς ὀλίγοις, not few in number, but the leaders of the oligarchical party.

nature is the same, yet they are more violent, or more tranquil, and of different kinds, according to the several* conjunctures at which they occur. For in peace and prosperity both cities and private men are better minded, because they fall not into such emergencies as constrain men to do things, whether they will or no; but war taking away the affluence of daily necessities, is a most violent master, and conformeth most men's passions to the present occasion. So sedition prevailed in the cities, and those that fell into it later, having heard what had been done in the former, far exceeded them in newness of conceit, both for the art of assailing, and for the strangeness of their revenges. The received value of names imposed for signification of things, was changed into arbitrary: for inconsiderate boldness was counted true-hearted manliness; provident deliberation, a handsome fear; modesty, the cloak of cowardice; to be wise in every thing, to be lazy in every thing. A furious suddenness was reputed a point of valour. To re-advise for the better security, was held for a fair pretext of tergiversation. He that was fierce, was always trusty; and he that contrained such a one, was suspected. He that did insidiate, if he took, was a wise man; but he that could find out the trap, a cleverer man than he: but he that had been so provident as not to need to do one or the other, was said to be a dissolver of fellowship, and one that stood in fear of his adversary. In brief, he that could outstrip another in the doing of an evil act, or that could persuade another thereto, that never meant it, was commended. To be kind to another, was not to be so near as to be of his fellowship, because these were ready to undertake any thing, without standing upon pretexts. For these fellowships† looked not to benefits consistent with the

* *Μετέβολαι τῶν ξυγτυχιῶν*, changes of the state of things.

† Hobbes seems to consider these *ἐταιρίαι* as associations of traders or artizans, such as our corporate companies were in their origin; which is clearly wrong. They would seem to have been more like the clubs of the French Revolution, formed for the advocacy of certain opinions, or to promote

existing laws, but to self-aggrandizement, contrary to them. And as for mutual trust amongst them, it was confirmed not so much by divine law,* as by the communication of guilt. And what was handsomely spoken by their adversaries, they received with an eye to their actions, to see whether they were too strong for them or not, and not ingenuously. To be revenged was in more request, than never to have received injury. And oaths of reconciliation (if any were) given by one to another, because in the present conjuncture they could do nought else, were binding, as long as the parties had no power otherwise; but upon opportunity, he that first durst, if he saw an unguarded place, thought his revenge sweeter by the trust than if he had taken the open way. And this course was valued both for its security, and because he that circumvented his adversary by fraud assumed to himself withal a mastery in point of wit. And dishonest men for the most part are sooner called able, than simple men honest. And men are ashamed of this title, but take a pride in the other. The cause of this is desire of rule, out of avarice and ambition, and the zeal of contention† from those two proceed-

the safety, and increase the influence of the several members, by enabling them to act in concert.

* By oath.

† *Φιλονεικία*, properly that spite which reigneth in two adversaries whilst they contend, or eagerness in striving. "That is to say, superadded to the definite motives which lead men to embark in political contests; they contract, when once embarked in them, a party spirit wholly distinct from the objects of their party, and which is sometimes transmitted to their descendants, even when no notions of the original cause of quarrel are preserved. Such was the case with the factions of the Circus at Constantinople, and with those deadly feuds which have prevailed from time to time among the lower classes in Ireland. In the outrages committed some years ago by the parties called Caravats and Shanavests, neither the persons who were executed for these outrages, nor any one else, could tell what was the dispute. It was notorious who were Caravats and who were Shanavests, and this was all."—Arnold.

ing. For such as were of authority in the cities, both of the one and the other faction, the one under the decent pretext of political equality of the many, the other of moderate aristocracy, though in words they seemed to be servants of the public, they made it in effect but the prize of their contention. And striving by whatsoever means to overcome, both ventured on most horrible outrages, and revenged them even beyond the provocations, without any regard of justice, or the public good, but limiting them, each faction, by their own appetite: and stood ready, whether by unjust sentence, or with their own hands, when they should get the uppermost, to satisfy their spite. So that neither side thought to do, any thing by honest means; but they were best spoken of, that could pass a business though against the grain, with fair words. The neutrals of the city were destroyed by both factions; partly because they would not side with them, and partly for envy that they should so escape.

“ Thus was wickedness on foot in every kind, throughout all Greece, by the occasion of the party conflicts. Sincerity (whereof there is much in a generous nature) was laughed down, and vanished. And it was far the best course to stand distrustfully against each other, for neither were words powerful, nor oaths terrible enough to assure reconciliation. And being all of them, the more they considered, the more desperate of security, they rather contrived how to avoid a mischief, than were able to rely on any man's faith. And for the most part such as had the least wit had the best success; for both their own defect, and the subtilty of their adversaries, putting them in a great fear to be overcome in words, or at least in pre-insidiation, by their enemies' great craft, they therefore went roundly to work with them, with deeds. Whereas the other, thinking in their arrogance that they should be aware in time, and that they needed not to take by force what they might do by plot, were thereby unprovided, and so the more easily slain.

“ In Corcyra then were most of these evils committed first: and besides these, all that men might perpetrate

in retaliation, who had been tyrannically governed by that very party which they now saw in their power ; or that men just freed from their accustomed poverty, and greedily coveting their neighbour's goods, would against justice agree to ; or which men, assailing each other, not upon desire of gain, but as equal against equal, in the intemperance of anger would cruelly and inexorably execute. And the common course of life being at that time confounded in the city, the nature of man, which is wont even against law to do evil, gotten now above the law, was very ready to display itself as intemperately passionate, too strong for justice, and an enemy to all superiority. For they would never else have preferred revenge to sanctity, and gain to that condition of justice, in which envy would have lost its power to do harm. And for the laws common to all men in such cases (which, as long as they be in force, give hope to all that suffer injury), men desire not to leave them standing, against the need a man in danger may have of them, but by their revenges on others, to be beforehand in subverting them.* :

“ Such were the passions of the Corcyreans first of all other Grecians, towards one another in the city. And Eurymedon and the Athenians departed with their galleys. Afterwards such of the Corcyreans as had fled (for there escaped about five hundred of them) having seized on the forts in the continent, established themselves in their own territory on the mainland opposite the island, and from thence came over and robbed the islanders, and did them much hurt ; and there grew a great famine in the city. They likewise sent ambassadors to Lacedæmon and Corinth, to negotiate concerning their return ; and when they could get nothing done, having gotten boats, and some auxiliary soldiers, they passed a while after to the number of about six hundred into the

* The eighty-fourth chapter of the third book (which is contained in this paragraph) has recently been pronounced spurious by several distinguished critics. See the question discussed by Dr. Arnold, vol. i. p. 608

island. Where when they had set their boats on fire, that they might have no hope but in the making themselves masters of the country, they went up into the hill Istone, and having there fortified themselves with a wall, infested those within, and were masters of the territory.*

“In the seventh year of the war† Eurymedon and Sophocles, after their departure from Pylus with the Athenian fleet towards Sicily, arriving at Corcyra, joined with those of the city, and made war upon those Corcyreans which lay encamped upon the hill Istone, and which, after the sedition, had come over, and made themselves masters of the country, and done much harm: and having assaulted their fortification, took it. But the men all in one troop escaped to a certain high ground, and thence made their composition, which was this; ‘that they should deliver up the foreigners that aided them; and that they themselves, having rendered their arms, should stand to the judgment of the people of Athens.’ Hereupon the generals granted them truce, and transported them to the island of Ptychia, to be there in custody till the Athenians should send for them; with this condition, ‘that if any one of them should be taken running away, then the truce to be broken for them all.’ But the leaders of the commons of Corcyra, fearing lest the Athenians would not kill those who were sent to them, devise against them this plot. To some few of those in the island they secretly send their friends, and instruct them to say, as if forsooth, it were for good will, that it was their best course with all speed to get away (and withal to offer to provide them of a boat), for that the Athenian commanders intended verily to deliver them to the Corcyrean people.

“When they were persuaded to do so, and that a boat was treacherously prepared, as they rowed away they were taken, and the truce being now broken, were all given up into the hands of the Corcyreans. It did

* Thucyd. iii. 70, 85.

† B.C. 425.

much further this plot, by giving to the pretence held out an appearance of reality, and making the agents in it less fearful, that the Athenian generals evidently did not wish the men to be carried home by others, whilst they themselves were to go into Sicily, and the honour of it be ascribed to those that should convoy them. The Corcyreans having received them into their hands, imprisoned them in a large edifice, from whence afterwards they took them out by twenty at a time, and made them pass through a lane of men of arms, bound together, and receiving strokes and thrusts from those on either side, according as any one espied his enemy. And to hasten the pace of those that went slowliest on, others were set to follow them with whips.

“ They had taken out of the room in this manner, and slain, to the number of threescore, before they that remained knew it, who thought they were but removed, and carried to some other place. But when they knew the truth, some or other having told them, they then cried out to the Athenians, and bid them, if they wished their death, kill them themselves; and refused any more to go out of the building, nor would suffer, they said, as long as they were able, any man to come in. But neither had the Corcyreans any purpose to force entrance by the door, but getting up to the top of the house, uncovered the roof, and threw tiles, and shot arrows at them. They in prison defended themselves as well as they could; but many also slew themselves with the arrows shot by the enemy, by thrusting them into their throats, and strangling themselves with the cords of certain beds that were in the room, and with balts made of their own garments rent in pieces. And having continued most part of the night (for night overtook them in the action), partly strangling themselves by all such means as they found, and partly shot at from above, they all perished. When day came, the Corcyreans laid them one across another* in carts, and carried them out of

* *ἑπὶ ἄλλη*, signifieth properly, after the manner that mats or hurdles are platted.

the city. And of their wives, as many as were taken in the fortification, they made bond-women. In this manner were the Corcyreans that kept the hill,* brought to destruction by the commons. And thus ended this far-spread sedition, for so much as concerned this present war: for other seditions there remained nothing worth the relation."†

It would be difficult to find a more thoroughly hateful state of society than that which appears from this passage, and from the description of the plague of Athens, to have existed in Greece at this period. The picture, it is to be remembered, comes to us on the authority of one whose impartiality and deep powers of observation are alike unquestioned, no splenetic, no visionary, but one who had mixed largely and in high station among the stirring times of which he writes. The most astonishing circumstance connected with the depravity here exhibited, is the short period in which it appears to have shot up into such rank growth. We possess, it is true, little knowledge of any thing but the public acts of Greece anterior to the Peloponnesian war, at which time the contemporary historian, and still more the contemporary comedian Aristophanes, supply us with abundant notices of private life, which are continued and enlarged by the philosophers and orators. Still, as far as we have the means of judging, there seems no reason to ascribe to the Greeks, until about the Peloponnesian war, a smaller share of morality and religion than has usually been found among heathen nations. Whence then in so short a time this utter loss of moral sense and disruption of the bonds of society? The question is not an easy one to answer, but the substance of the best answer that we can give is comprised in the introductory chapter to this volume.

To supply a series of parallels to this domestic contest is scarcely possible. Among insurrections and civil wars, events of equal atrocity and more astounding magnitude might be found, but scarcely events of the same

* Istone.

† Thucyd., iv. 46, 48.

character. We naturally turn first to the other great nation of antiquity. Here we are warned against the most obvious comparison by a late eminent scholar. After speaking of the dangers incident to the struggle between the aristocracy and the people in that often-occurring form of a nation's early existence, when it is divided into a privileged race or caste, whose power is founded on conquest, and a commonalty personally free, but politically dependant, as were the Saxons, while the distinction between Saxon and Norman blood continued in England; after speaking of the dangers which beset that contest which is sure to take place when the spread of wealth and knowledge has equalized the personal qualities of the rulers and the ruled, he continues: "If the nation escapes these, either originally or finally, it enters upon its state of manhood, and is exposed to a somewhat different succession of struggles. The contest is then between property and numbers, and wherever it has come to a crisis, I know not that it has in any instance terminated favourably. Such was the state of Greece in the time of Thucydides; of Rome from the passing of the Publilian laws to the end of the commonwealth: and such has been the state of England since the Revolution of 1688. Comparisons drawn from the preceding period are inapplicable to this; while on the other hand, as the phenomena of this second period arise out of causes connected with the earlier state of things, they cannot be clearly understood unless that former state be fully known to us. Thus, to argue that the Romans were less bloody than the Greeks from a comparison between the factions of the Peloponnesian war, and the struggles of the Roman commons against the patricians, is to compare the two nations under very different circumstances; it is instituting a comparison between the intensity of our passions in manhood and in childhood. The bloody factions of Corcyra and Megara are analogous to the civil wars of Marius and Sylla, of Cæsar and Pompey, of Brutus and Cassius against the Triumvirs: the harmless contests between the commons and patricians can only be compared to

those which prevailed in Greece before the Persian invasion, when the party of the coast at Athens was disputing the exclusive ascendancy so long enjoyed by the eupatridæ or party of the plain.* And the true conclusion is, that the second contest between property and numbers is far more inevitably accompanied by atrocious crimes, than that earlier quarrel, in which property and numbers were united against property and birth."†

The Corcyrean secession differed from the secession to the Mons Sacer, and other disputes between patricians and plebeians, in being a struggle of parties, not ranks. Very little positive information concerning the constitution of the island has been preserved.‡ Originally; probably, its Corinthian colonists established an oligarchy: but the prosecution of maritime affairs was always held greatly to favour the ascendancy of the people, and in Thucydides we find no trace of a privileged body of citizens at Corcyra any more than at Athens. When speaking of the 250, whom the Corinthians selected as a sort of hostages to regain their influence, he calls them, "for the most part the first men of the city in power."§ Elsewhere he describes them as "those in possession of things," or "the few,"|| but not as the magistracy, or in terms which lead us to suppose that they formed a constitutional aristocracy either of birth or wealth. This, therefore, was a branch of the great struggle which gave its character to the whole Peloponnesian war, whether the oligarchical principle, under the patronage of Lacedæmon, or the democratic under the patronage of Athens, should reign in Greece. The co-existence of

* See vol. i. chap. v. p. 154.

† Arnold's Thucydides, App. i. p. 638.

‡ For what little is known or supposed, see Muller's History of the Doric Race, book iii. ch. ix. § 5; English Translation, vol. ii.: the best book of reference for all political information relative to the Dorian states.

§ ἐπύργων δὲ καὶ δυνάμει αὐτῶν οἱ πλείους πρῶτοι ὄντες τῆς πόλεως, I. 55.

|| οἱ ἔχοντες τὰ πράγματα, III. 72. οἱ ὀλίγοι, III. 74.

the two in peace seems, from the restless and intriguing temper of the people, to have been impossible ; and the experience of other cities had shown that for the worsted party there was no security but in flight, attended usually by sentence of exile and confiscation. And there is no authority to which men submit so reluctantly, no hardships which they feel so keenly, as those which arise from the elevation of their former equals. The circumstances of the times, therefore, combined with the spreading moral pestilence to give a desperation to this contest, from which the early dissensions of patricians and plebeians, happily for Rome, were free. Here each party had a definite object to contend for ; the one, the relaxation of oppressive privileges ; the other, to maintain unimpaired the immunities and dignity of their order : and each had wisdom, the one to be moderate in its demands ; the other to concede moderately, rather than hazard the very being of the state by an appeal to arms. No personal or political hatred inflamed the passions, unless where some enslaved debtor was maddened by suffering, or some hot-headed patrician, such as the old legends of Rome represented Coriolanus to be, became impatient that the swinish multitude should believe they had rights ; each party felt that the other was necessary to its welfare, and though driven to violence, the plebeians still looked up with respect and affection to their hereditary aristocracy.

As these disturbances belong to an earlier, so the civil wars of Marius and Sylla, and those which ended in the establishment of the Empire, belong, we think, to a more advanced stage of society than does the Corcyrean sedition, which is compared to them in the foregoing quotation. Rome had reached, and had passed the period at which a true democracy becomes impossible except through the medium of representation ; while at Corcyra, even when the popular faction was supreme, the government was an oligarchy, in respect of the *whole* population of the state, of which slaves and foreigners constituted, we may presume, a considerable majority.

The legislative and the armed body were identical ; a part of that body might triumph over the rest, but no one could mount on the shoulders of the people to a military despotism, and then kick away the step by which he had risen. No leader seems to have risen to the absolute power of Marius, or Sylla, or Cæsar ; if there had, it must have been by consent of the prevailing party, who would therefore have been implicated in his actions. At Rome the case was very different : the legislative authority centred in the resident citizens, the military power of the state was more than equally shared with them by the provincial armies, composed partly of barbarians, partly of subjects of the state, entitled to a greater or lesser share of the privileges of citizenship, but not to vote in the assemblies of the people, and partly, it is true, of citizens, but those long absent from the seat of government, and careless about politics, but devoted to the leader who had led them on to plunder, honour, and victory. Some faction therefore was to be courted to gain place and power, but he who had gained them, and with them military command and influence, was in great measure independent of his former associates. Sylla and Marius were terrible to friends as well as foes, and it would be unfair to charge upon the Roman people the enormous crimes committed under the military tyrannies which they established.

If we look for parallels in modern history, the search will not be more successful. The domestic quarrels as well as the structure of the Italian states, bear a close analogy to those of the Greek republics, and the contests of the oligarchical and democratic parties, and the influence of Sparta or Athens, as one or the other prevailed, may be closely exemplified by the bitter quarrels of the Guelphs and Ghibelines, and the interest exerted, by means of these parties, by the Pope and the Emperor. But full as is Italian history of desperate feuds, we cannot call to mind any one worthy to be compared with the transactions at Corcyra. The massacre, called the Sicilian Vespers, when 8000 French were

surprised and slain in one night, by a simultaneous insurrection of the native Sicilians, is a memorable and frightful example of popular revenge: but the act of a people rising in defence of its rights, atrocious as is such a method of asserting them, is not to be placed by the side of so cold-blooded, and unprovoked, and faithless a massacre as that of the conquered Corcyreans. The massacre of St. Bartholomew might compete with it in point of treachery, but the ground of quarrel, and the relation of the contending parties, were entirely dissimilar.

The outrages committed in France by the insurgent peasantry, called *Jacquerie*, are unlike the massacres at Corcyra, inasmuch as they belong to an earlier stage of society, a stage again different from that contemplated by Dr. Arnold, when he speaks of the harmless nature of that earlier quarrel in which property and numbers are united against property and birth. These risings, and the corresponding risings in England, were the acts of men without property, and many of them without a legal capability of acquiring it; men hostile to all the institutions of society, because to them society had been little but an engine of oppression. They were the efforts of brute force against all that is superior to itself; the rage of the untamed wolf after he has broken his chain. We say this not in justification of the conduct of their feudal lords, nor in censure of their earnest desire to break the yoke which bore them down to the ground. But whether their cause was good or bad, the method of their advocating it was brutal; and herein servile wars, if not most formidable as to their result, are most to be deprecated, because the passions of each party are sure to be exasperated to the uttermost: and because the insurgents, being without the pale of the laws of war, have no temptation to show mercy, and no hope but in victory. And so to the *Jacquerie*, every thing more refined or exalted than themselves was the object of their deadly hate. They had no thought to raise themselves; that was beyond the grasp of their minds: but

they were bent on pulling down others to their own level, so that distinctions the most inoffensive or laudable were as odious to them as the rank and power which had been misused to the oppression of the commonalty. "Be it known unto thee by these presence, even the presence of Lord Mortimer, that I am the besom that must sweep the court clear of such filth as thou art. Thou hast most traitorously corrupted the youth of the realm in erecting a grammar-school: and whereas, before our fore-fathers had no other books but the score and the tally, thou hast caused printing to be used, and contrary to the king, his crown, and his dignity, thou hast built a paper-mill. It will be proved to thy face that thou hast men about thee that usually talk of a noun and a verb, and such abominable words as no Christian can endure to hear. Thou hast appointed justices of peace, to call poor men before them about matters that they were not able to answer. Moreover, thou hast put them in prison, and because they could not read thou hast hanged them, when, indeed, only for that cause they have been most worthy to live."*

This picture is somewhat highly coloured, but if the reader will consult Holinshed for the account of Wat Tyler's rebellion in 1381, he will find that there is good authority for it. "To recite what was done in every part of the realme, in time of these hellish troubles, it is not possible; but this is to be considered, that the rage of the commons was universallie such, as it might seem they had generallie conspired together to do what mischeefe they could devise. As among sundrie other, what wickednesse was it to compell teachers of children in grammar schooles to swear never to instruct any in their art! Again, they could never have a more mischievous mean-

* Cade's speech to Lord Say, Henry VI. part ii. vol. iv. p. 7. The last sentence alludes to the law which gave to persons capitally convicted the benefit of clergy, that is, their lives were spared if they could read; it being presumed that none but clergy could do so.

ing than to burn and destroy all old and auncient monuments, and to murder and despatch out of the way all such as were able to commit to memorie either any new or old records. For it was dangerous among them to be known for one that was learned, and more dangerous if any man were found with a penner and inkhorn at his side, for such seldom escaped from them with life."* The fidelity with which Shakspeare has copied the chronicles may be readily exemplified from a variety of passages.

Cade. How now! who's there?

Smith. The clerk of Chatham; he can write, and read, and cast accompt.

Cade. O, monstrous! Come hither, sirrah. I must examine thee. What is thy name?

Clerk. Emmanuel.

Dick. They used to write it on the top of letters. 'Twill go hard with you.

Cade. Let me alone. Dost thou use to write thy name, or hast thou a mark to thyself, like an honest plain-dealing man?

Clerk. Sir, I thank God, I have been so well brought up that I can write my name.

All. He hath confessed: away with him: he's a villain and a traitor.

Cade. Away with him, I say: hang him with his pen and inkhorn about his neck.

Henry VI., II. iv. 2.

It is time, however, to proceed to the historical evidence on which our statements of the excesses of the Jacquerie are founded.

"Anon (A. D. 1358) there began a marvelous tribulacion in the realme of France, for certayne people of the common villages, without any head or ruler, assembled togyder in Beauvoisin. In the beginning they passed nat a hundred in nombre: they sayd how the noblemen of the realme of Fraunce, knyghtes, and squyers, shamed the realme, and that it shulde be a grete

* Holinshed, vol. ii. p. 746.

wealth to distroy them all ; and eche of them sayd it was true, and sayd alle with one voice,—Shame have he that doth nat his power to distroy all the gentylmen of the realme. Thus they gathered togyder without any other counsaile, and without any armure, saving with staves and knyves, and so went to the house of a knyght dwelling thereby, and brake up his house, and slew the knyght, and the lady, and all his children, grete and small, and brent his house : and so dyd they to dyvers other castelles and good houses. And they multiplied so that they were a six thousand ; and ever as they went forward they increased, for such lyke as they were fell ever to them ; so that every gentylman fledde fro them, and took their wyves and chyldren with them, and fledde x or xx leages off to be in suretie, and left their houses voyde and their goods therein.—These myschevous people thus assembled without capitayne or armure, robbed, brent, and slew all gentylmen that they coude lay handes on, and forced and ravysshed ladyes and damoselles, and dyd such shameful dedes, that no humayn creature ought to think on any such, and he that dyd most mischiefe was most pleased with them, and greatest maister.—Whan the gentylmen of Beauvoisin, of Corbois, of Vermandois, and of other lands whereas these myschevous people were conversant, saw the woodnesse* among them, they sent for socours to their frendes into Flanders, to Brabant, to Hainault, and to Bohemia : so there came fro all partes, and so all these gentylmen straungers assembled togyder, and dyd sette upon these people wher they might fynde them, and slew and hanged them upon trees by heapes. The kynge of Naver on a day slew of them mo than thre thousand, beside Cleremont in Beauvoisin. It was time to take them up, for and they had been all togyder assembled, they were mo than an hundred thousand, and when they were demanded why they dyd so yvell dedes, they wolde answer and say, they could nat tell, but they did as they sawe other do, think-

* Frenzy. The adjective wood, or wode, is of common occurrence in the Scottish language.

ing thereby to have destroyed all the nobles and gentylmen of the world.”*

It was the same spirit which somewhat later, in England, prompted that rebellion of Wat Tyler, of which we have above spoken. This was a servile war, produced by oppression and misery; a rising of the serfs against the nobles, “who had grete fraunchise over the commons, and kepeth them in servage, that is to say, their tenants ought by custom to labour the lorde’s landes, to gather and bring home theyr corne, and some to thrash and to fanne; and by servage to make theyr hay, and to hew theyr wood, and bring it home: all these things they ought to do by servage.”——“These unhappy people beganne to styrrre because they were kept in grete servage; and in the begynning of the world, they sayd, there were no bondmen; wherefore they mayntayned that none ought to be bonde, without he dyd treason to his lorde, as Lucifer dyd to God; but they sayd they coude have no such batayle, for they were nouthur angels nor spirittes, but men formed to the similitude of their lordes. Of this imagynacyon was a folisshe priest of Kent, called Johan Ball, who wolde oft tymes, on the sondaye after masse, assemble the people about him, and say thus, A ye good people, the mater goth nat well to passe in Englande, nor shall nat do tyll every thing be common; and that there be no vyllayns nor gentylmen, but that we be all unied togyder, and that the lordes be no greater maisters than we be. What have we deserved, or why sholde we be thus kept in servage? We be all come fro one father and one mother, Adam and Eve; whereby can they say or showe that they be gretter lordes than we be?”† Part of the matter of the priest’s sermon was well enough, and the cause was good, if its supporters had been capable of self-government; but their object was to establish anarchy, not liberty, and none will be found hardy enough to regret their failure.

* Lord Berniers’ Froissart, vol. i. chap. 182, 183.

† Ibid., vol. i. chap. 381.

After dwelling so long on things which ought to be distinguished from the Corcyrean sedition, it is time now, if ever, to produce those which admit of being compared with it. We have but two to bring forward: the second bears a more than usual resemblance to it in respect of the events which took place; the first bears little resemblance to it in respect of events, but is distinguished, if we may trust the contemporary historian, by a forgetfulness of natural ties, and relaxation of the bonds of society, very like that described by Thucydides, and not less worth noticing because the two arose out of entirely different circumstances, political and other. We allude to the seditions which tore Constantinople, especially under the reign of Justinian, ostensibly commencing in so petty a cause as the superiority of one colour to another in skill or fortune in the public games, in which those who contended for prizes, like our jockies, were distinguished by colours. "The race," says Gibbon, "in its first institution, was a simple contest of two chariots, whose drivers were distinguished by white and red liveries; two additional colours, a light green and a cerulean blue, were afterwards introduced, and as the races were repeated twenty-five times, one hundred chariots contributed in the same day to the pomp of the circus. The four factions soon acquired a legal establishment, and a mysterious origin, and their fanciful colours were derived from the various appearances of nature in the four seasons of the year; the red dogstar of summer, the snows of winter, the deep shades of autumn, and the cheerful verdure of the spring. Another interpretation preferred the elements to the seasons, and the struggle of the green and blue was supposed to represent the conflict of the earth and sea. Their respective victories announced either a plentiful harvest, or a prosperous navigation, and the hostility of the husbandmen and mariners was somewhat less absurd than the blind ardour of the Roman people, who devoted their lives and fortunes to the colour which they had espoused."*

Decline and Fall, chap. xl.

F 2

With the seat of government, the amusements and the laws of the Roman circus were of course transferred to Constantinople. Here the mutual jealousy of the colours soon became combined with political and theological quarrels, and gave rise to disturbances which shook some emperors on their thrones, and vitally affected the peace and welfare of the state. The historian of the eastern empire has not traced the steps by which these graver discords became connected with the badges of amusement. A scholar of our own day has collected the scattered facts which bear on this question, but still without furnishing a satisfactory account of the origin or history of these divisions.* It may indeed be inferred from a passage in Procopius, which we shall presently quote, that even in his time no account could be given or reason be assigned for so preposterous and blind an enmity. Nor will this surprise any person who reflects how easily an accidental quarrel is perpetuated by the adoption of a name or symbol, and how greedily the vulgar adopt the outward sign of faction, regardless of the principles which it indicates. Many bloody tumults and desperate feuds would have been spared to Ireland if green and orange had never been adopted as the signs of national and religious hatred; for men would soon have ceased to care or inquire whether their neighbour went to church or chapel, had not the insulting badges of ascendancy and of dissent been continually paraded before their eyes. Any measure which did away with the use of party colours at elections would contribute largely to the quiet and well-being of England. Whatever raises an ostensible division between two classes of society should be sedulously discouraged by a government. The late Lord Liverpool, according to a current story, showed his prudence in wearing and recommending white hats, when that article of dress was the badge of a party violently opposed to his govern-

* See 'Ueber die Parteien der Rennbahn, vornehmlich im Byzantinischen Kaiserthum, von F. Wilken, in von Raumer's Historisches Taschenbuch.'

ment. His intention was answered perfectly, and we now wear what we please without compromising our political faith.

Whatever was the origin and progress of the quarrel, we find in the early part of the sixth century the blue and green factions inveterately opposed to each other; the red having merged in the green, and the white in the blue. In the reign of Anastasius, the greens having brought concealed weapons into the theatre, massacred at once 3000 of their blue adversaries. A soldier of fortune, named Justin, succeeded Anastasius, and was succeeded by his own nephew, Justinian, during whose reign the blue faction gained the ascendancy: "A secret attachment to the family or sect of Anastasius was imputed to the greens; the blues were zealously devoted to the cause of orthodoxy and Justinian, and their grateful patron protected, above five years, the disorders of a faction, whose seasonable tumults overawed the palace, the senate, and capitals of the East."* "In every city," says the contemporary Procopius, "the people are from old time split into two factions, of the blue and green; but it is not long since this frenzy first possessed them, that in the cause of these names and colours in which they appear at the public games, they will spend their substance, expose their bodies to the bitterest indignities, and even consent to die by a shameful death. And while they fight with the opposite party they cannot tell the nature of their quarrel; being at the same time aware that even if they get the upper hand in battle, they will then be led to prison, and suffer a death of the worst tortures. This hatred of one man to another springs up without cause; but it remains endless, yielding neither to the rights of kindred or friendship, even though brethren, or such near relations, be partisans of these colours. And so long as their faction may have the uppermost, they care neither for things human nor divine, whether there be any impiety offered towards God, or whether the laws and government be

* Gibbon, chap xl.

violated by friend or enemy. For being themselves probably in want of common necessities, they care not however deeply their country be injured, so long as their own party is likely to thrive by it. And even women share in this taint, not merely following their husbands, but even opposing them (if it shall so chance), though they go never to the theatres, and are not therefore excited by any such motives. So that I can call this nothing better than a disease of the mind.”*

“In the Anecdotes, he speaks again, and more fully, of the excesses committed by the blues under the protection of Justinian.

“They dressed their hair in a manner new to the Romans, letting the moustache and beard grow to an extreme length, like the Persians, while they shaved the fore part of their heads to the very temples, leaving it to grow as long and thick as it liked behind, in imitation of the Massagetæ, after whom they called this the Hunnish mode. In dress they affected a splendour beyond their means, defraying the cost at other men’s expense. Their sleeves were made very close at the wrist, but up towards the shoulder they spread to an unutterable breadth.† So that in the theatre or hippodrome as often as they moved their hands in shouting, or encouraging others, as was their custom, they usually raised the limb to make fools think their bodies so robust, as that a garment of that size was necessary; not perceiving that by the emptiness of the garment the spareness of the body was the more shown. At first they carried arms, by night openly, and by day wore double-edged daggers concealed under their clothes; and coming out in companies as it grew dark, they stripped the better sort either in the open market or in passages, robbing those who fell into their hands of cloaks, golden brooches, or whatever else it might be. And some they even killed after robbing them, that they might tell no tales. By these doings all men were much grieved, and especially those that were not of the blue faction (for

* Procopius, Persic., vol. i. chap. 24.

† ἐς ἀφ᾽ αὐτὸν τι εὖρους διερχέχυντο χρῆμα.

even they themselves went not scot-free), and from thenceforth men wore brass brooches, and girdles and cloaks beneath their condition. . . . There was no known crime which at this time was not committed and left unpunished. First they only killed their adversaries, then advancing in guilt they slew those who never had offended them. Many hired them to take off an enemy, which they did under pretence that the dead man was of the green party, though really he were quite unknown to them. And these things were not done in darkness as before, but in every hour of the day and place of the city, and before the eyes of the most eminent men: for being in no fear of punishment they cared not for concealment; but rather esteemed it a glory to those who laid claim to strength and manhood, that at one blow they could kill any unarmed person who came across them. In this slippery conjuncture no one had any hope of surviving; for no place was strong, no season sacred enough to warrant security; for even in the most honoured temples and assemblies men were slain, and no account taken of them. There was no more trusting either in friends or relations, for many perished by those who were nearest to them. And no inquiry was made into what had been done, but evil fell without warning, and no one helped him that was down. Law and contracts were no longer binding; every thing went according to the will of the strongest, and the state was like an unestablished tyranny, continually passing into new hands and beginning afresh. The minds of the authorities seemed to be amazed and enslaved by fear of one man; and the judges determined causes not according to law and justice, but as the parties in the suit were in good or bad odour with the parties in the state. For it was a capital offence that a judge should controvert the orders of the ruling party, the blues.”*

Such was the state of Constantinople, the blues exulting in the royal favour, when, in January, 532, the citi-

* Procopius, *Anecdota*, chap. vii.

zens were assembled in the hippodrome, the Emperor himself presiding over the games. The green faction disturbed the peace of the assembly by complaints, until at length Justinian was induced to enter into a parley with them by the voice of an officer called Mandator, a sort of civil aide-de-camp, whose duty was to receive and transmit his sovereign's orders. The dialogue which ensued is justly characterized by Gibbon, who has only given a short specimen of it, as the most singular that ever passed between a prince and his subjects.

We may premise, to account for the strange and unintelligible turn of many of the sentences, that the original is written in the corrupt Greek popularly spoken at Constantinople in the sixth century, and is full of allusions to which we possess no key, and words which the lexicographers have not explained, and sentences in which it is not possible to make out any grammatical construction. These difficulties, however, make the passage the more curious; inasmuch as they give reason to suppose that the dialogue was taken down as it occurred, and has not been polished in passing through the hands of historians.

Green. Long may you live, august Justinian. I am aggrieved, thou only good one, I cannot bear it. God knows, I dare not name him, lest it turn to his advantage and to my peril.

Mandator. Who is he? I know not.

Green. He who wrongs me will be found among the shoemakers,* thrice august.

Mand. No one wrongs you.

Green. One, and one only wrongs me. Mother of God, may he never lift his head again!

Mand. What man is he? I know not.

Green. You, and you only know, august Justinian, who wrongs me to-day.

Mand. If in truth there be any, I know him not.

* *eis τὰ τζαγγαρία ἐπίσκειται.* Calopodius is meant. This name in Greek means a *last*; *τζαγγάρης*, a shoemaker; *τζαγγαρία*, shoemakers' offices. Not in Theoph.

Green. Calopodius, the armour-bearer, wrongs me, Master of all.

Mand. Calopodius has no employment.

Green. Be he who he may, he shall die the death of Judas! God repay him his injuries to me, and that quickly!

Mand. You come, not to the games, but to insult your rulers.

Green. If any wrong me, he shall die the death of Judas!

Mand. Be quiet, ye Jews, Manichæans, and Samaritans.

Green. Jews are we, and Samaritans? the mother of God is with all.

Mand. How long will you heap curses on yourselves?

Green. If any deny that our master believes rightly, let him be accursed like Judas!

Mand. I tell you to be baptized in the name of one.

This seems to be a theological gibe at the unorthodox party, which they repel with anger. There is an ambiguity in the reply, which it is not easy to translate, because, from the corruption of the text, or from the debased Greek in which the dialogue is chiefly written, we can come to no certain conclusion as to the real meaning. They express their willingness to be baptized according to order, and use a word which has been interpreted either to mean "Bring water," or to confer on Justinian the appellation of "Pump." There certainly was something in it which raised the Emperor's wrath, and extracted from him a reply more to the purpose than any yet made.

Mand. In truth, if you are not quiet I will cut off your heads.

Green. Every one seeks power for his own safety, and if we speak because of our affliction, let not your greatness be indignant, for God endures all of us. We having cause for what we say, give to every thing its right name. We know not, thrice august, where the palace is, nor the condition of the state. We go not into the city, except to lay snares against the ass,* and I wish we went not for that, thrice august.

* ἕταν εἰς βορδὸν καθέδρωμαι, or βουδρώνην. βορδων is

Mand. Every free man appears where he will, without danger.

Green. I hope I am free, yet I cannot appear without danger. And if a man is free, if he be suspected to be green, he shall be openly punished.

Mand. Hang-dogs, have you no mercy on your own lives?

Green. Abolish our colour—justice is at an end. Cease yourself from slaughter; then go to, we will be punished. See that blood-streaming fountain, and then punish whom you will. Verily human nature cannot bear these two things at once! O that Sabbatius* had never been born, then would he never have begotten such a murderer. This is the twenty-sixth murder that is done at Zeugma. In the morning he was at the theatre, in the evening he was slain, Master of all!

Blue. You alone contain all the murderers of this stadium.

Green. When do you depart without slaughter?

Blue. You slay and disturb us; for you alone contain all the murderers of the stadium.

Green. Justinian, master, they provoke and no one kills them. One cannot choose but understand this. Who killed the carpenter at Zeugma?

Mand. You did.

Green. Who killed the son of Epagathus, O Emperor?

Blue. You murdered him, and you accuse the blues.

Green. Now the Lord pity us! Truth is oppressed. I should like to enter into controversy with those who say that God directs affairs. Whence this misery?

Mand. God is not tempted by evil. (Θεός κακῶν ἀπείραστος.)

Green. God is not tempted by evil. And who then is it that wrongs me? If there be here philosopher or hermit, let him distinguish between the two.

Mand. Blasphemers, odious to God, when will you cease?

Green. If your greatness wishes it I keep quiet, though against my will. Thrice august, I know all—all—but I am silent. Justice, farewell, your time is up. I change

an ass: the derivative seems only to occur here. Justinian appears to be meant, who was called the ass, from his habit of moving his ears. See the anecdotes, chap. 8. *νωθεὶ ὄνφ ἐμπερὲς μάλιστα, συχνὰ οἱ σειομένων τῶν ὄτων.*

* The father of Justinian.

sides and turn Jew; nay, better to turn Gentile than blue, God knows.

Blue. May I never see such a pollution! their envy troubles me.

Green. Dig up the bones of the spectators.*

After this the green party quitted the hippodrome, and left there the Emperor and the blues. The sequel may warn sovereigns against encouraging faction for their own ends. At this moment seven notorious murderers of both factions were paraded through the city previous to their execution. Five were immediately put to death, the other two obtained a respite by the breaking of the rope which should have hanged them. One of these surviving wretches belonged to the blue, the other to the green faction; and the parties forgot their enmity for a time to join in taking vengeance upon the government, which durst do justice upon their members. The consequence was a desperate tumult and insurrection, which lasted five days, during which a great part of the city was burnt; and which is known by the name of Nika, Conquer, from the watchword adopted by the rioters. For the history of it we must refer to Gibbon, or to the original authorities quoted by him, especially Procopius (Pers. i. 24) and Theophanes. At length Justinian found means to revive the mutual animosity of the factions; the blues resumed their allegiance to their protector, and the greens, left alone in the hippodrome, were attacked by the veteran troops of Belisarius, supported by their inveterate opponents. More than 30,000 persons are said to have perished in the massacre.

* Theophanes, p. 154, 6, ed. Par. 1655. This last taunt seems rather misplaced in the mouth of the greens, who had murdered 3000 of their enemies in the theatre. It is not always easy to trace the connexion and meaning of the dialogue. This arises partly from the nature of the language, which very often is hardly grammatical, partly from its abruptness and frequent allusions to circumstances unexplained elsewhere. It is also to be found with several various readings in the notes to the Anecdotes of Procopius, vol. ii. p. 134, ed. Par. 1663.

A curious anecdote connected with this subject is related elsewhere by Procopius. When Chosroes, the King of Persia, invaded Syria, he went to Apamea to see the sports of the circus; and having heard of Justinian's devotion to the blue faction, he thought it expedient to patronize the green. The blue charioteer at first had the advantage, the green following close upon his track. Chosroes thinking this was done on purpose to thwart him, became very angry, and cried out with threats, that it was not fair to give Cæsar the start,* and ordered the foremost to hold in their horses, and let the green get before them. This was done, and Chosroes and the greens plumed themselves on their victory.

The other example which we proposed to bring forward, which probably has already suggested itself to many of our readers, is one of the most memorable events of the French Revolution, the massacre of September 2—6, 1792. A short preface may serve to introduce it, since the history of the Revolution is pretty generally familiar.

In the summer of 1792 the executive power of the state was in effect wrested from the nominal authority, the Legislative Assembly, by a body of men styled the Commune, who had possessed themselves of the municipal government of Paris. In this body the leading persons were the flagitious triumvirate, Robespierre, Danton, and Marat. It is needless to speculate on the motives of such men. Whether the deed which we are about to relate was perpetrated only to further the ends of their party; whether, as some have said, it was prompted by the desire to get rid of those who might lay claim to a large mass of valuable personal property which had been seized from persons who had been denounced and arrested, and is said to have been embezzled by those disinterested patriots; or whether it were prompted solely by a savage thirst for blood:—which of these, or what other motive was the moving cause of

* τὸν Καίσαρα προτερῆσαι τῶν ἄλλων οὐ δέον. Procop., Pers. iii. xi.



Hippodrome of Constantinople.

this transaction, is of so little consequence towards determining its character, that it would be a waste of words to institute the inquiry. We proceed briefly to relate the facts.

At the end of August, 1792, the invasion of the Prussians, their advance to Verdun, and the capture of that strong place, created a great panic in the capital. Apprehensions were felt or expressed of a corresponding movement within the country on the part of the royalists, and the stern Danton asserted, in boding words, that it was necessary to strike fear into those who were disaffected to the republic. Before this time many *aristocrats*, chiefly priests and nobles, had been confined within the various prisons of Paris. Their numbers were now increased to a fearful extent by recent arrests of persons adverse to the Jacobin party, which then ruled in the Commune, until all these receptacles of human misery were filled to overflowing. The near approach of the Prussians was doubly favourable to the views of that party; it gave a colourable pretext for taking strong measures against all who could be represented as favouring the views of the invaders, and a reason for summoning to the field the citizens who could be called on to bear arms. The city being thus cleared of a large portion of those who were most able, and probably most inclined to interfere by force in the cause of justice and humanity, a free and safe course was left open to the fury of that turbulent party, whose yoke bore so heavy upon the liberated nation. It was determined by the junta in authority, that the safety of France required the massacre of the prisoners; and in the Marseillois and the mob of the capital, fit agents of the bloody mandate were readily found.

The total number of persons confined in the Parisian prisons is so differently stated that it is no easy matter even to approximate to the truth; it is estimated by Scott (vol. ii. p. 41) at about 8000. Early on the morning of September 2, news arrived of the capture of Verdun by the Prussians. This struck a terror into Paris, by which the projectors of the massacre hastened to

profit. The barriers were shut, the tocsin sounded, the alarm-gun fired. The prisons of Les Carmes, the Abbaye, and La Force, were first attacked, not in consequence of any general popular impulse; not by multitudes, such as had carried the Bastille and the Tuileries against superior arms and discipline; but by a crew of ruffians, composed partly of Marseillois, partly of the savage mob of Paris, in number not perhaps much exceeding a hundred, and goaded, it is said, with wine and spirits mixed with stimulating and maddening drugs. Armed with pikes, sabres, and similar weapons, they beset the prison doors to the sound of the Marseillois hymn, and demanded that the conspirators, as they called them, should be delivered into their hands: and the gaolers offered no resistance to their entrance.

Les Carmes, the Carmelite convent, had been converted into a prison for suspected ecclesiastics. This was the first object of attack; and, without parley, or the pretence of trial or inquiry, the murderers burst in and began to fire on their victims. "Where," it was asked, "is the Archbishop of Arles?" That prelate advanced boldly, and was cut down without his uttering a word of complaint. Others were hunted round the gardens, and shot like wild beasts; some escaped over the walls. At last, to proceed in a more orderly manner, and give less opportunity for escape, the survivors were all collected in the church, and led down two by two to be executed in the garden. The Bishop of Saintes, whose leg had been broken by a bullet, is reported to have said, "Gentlemen, I am ready to go and die, like the rest; but you see the state in which I am, my leg is broken; I beg that you will assist me, and I will go willingly to execution." The difficulty of obtaining correct information concerning these events may be estimated from the statements of the number of ecclesiastics who perished in Les Carmes. A royalist account raises it to 1168, a republican account reduces it to 163.* If it were necessary

* Dulaure, 'Événemens de la Révolution Française,' vol. ii. p. 192.

to make choice of either, we should not hesitate to adopt the smaller number.

The Abbaye and La Force were the next objects of attack. Here there was some mockery of judicial observances. The form of trial was brief enough; a few armed ruffians constituted themselves a tribunal, before which the prisoners were led one by one. The investigation seldom went much beyond asking the name of the person, and referring to the charges alleged against him in the gaoler's register. If these afforded ground for the suspicion of incivism, and the judges, as was almost always the case, decreed his death, their sentence, to prevent the dangerous efforts of despair, was conveyed in the equivocal terms, "Give the prisoner freedom," or, "Convey him to La Force," if he were confined at the Abbaye, and *vice versa*. He was then led from the room, and struck down, for the most part, before he reached the court-yard, with eager cruelty. Women as well as men mingled in this frightful scene, and inflicted the most loathsome indignities on the mangled bodies.

These proceedings were virtually authorized and encouraged by the presence of deputies from the Commune, wearing the municipal scarf, but nominally charged to select and deliver those who were imprisoned for debt. Not content with this negative sanction, Billaud Varennes, who was one of them, openly stimulated the murderers, promising them not only the plunder of the dead bodies, but the further gratification of a louis per day, as the reward of their good service. And it appears from the records of the time, that this money was actually paid. Yet much of the trifling property found on the persons of the slain was delivered up, it is said, for the use of the state; as if the actors of these horrors, by some strange caprice, had professed to be really disinterested.

An officer named Saint Méard, who was confined in the Abbaye, has written, under the title, 'Mon Agonie de trente-huit heures,' an account of the feelings and conduct of the prisoners during the frightful period of suspense, which elapsed between the commencement of

the massacres, and the moment when the fatal summons reached each of the sufferers. "Our most important occupation," he says, "was to observe in what manner death might be met most easily when we should enter the place of slaughter. From time to time we sent one of our number to a turret-window, to let us know how the miserable men who were destroyed met their fate, and to consider, from what they told us, how it would be best for us to conduct ourselves. They said that those who stretched out their hands protracted their sufferings, because the sabre-strokes were deadened before they reached the head: that sometimes their hands and arms were even hewn off before they fell, and that those who placed their hands behind their backs would suffer least. It was on such horrid particulars as these that we had to deliberate. We calculated the advantages of this last-named position, and in turn advised each other to assume it when our turn should arrive." It is hard to conceive a situation more trying to human fortitude. The prisoners generally met their fate with firmness, and in many instances boldly avowed and gloried in the principles and hereditary honours which were the sure passports to their fate. In some few instances the murderers relented. One or two men were preserved by the devoted interposition of female relatives. But very few of those who were imprisoned on political grounds lived to relate the horrors which they had passed through. Saint Méard, although he boldly avowed himself a royalist, was one of the number.*

For four days did this frightful scene continue, unsanctioned by authority, save the instigation and half-expressed approbation of the Commune, perpetrated by an insignificant mob, who, with the smallest portion of energy, might have been overpowered at once. The Legislative Assembly sent some of their members to remonstrate; men known as Jacobins, who came back,

* We have not seen his book itself, but there are extracts from it in Dulaure, and among them a very curious account of his examination before the tribunal, vol. ii. p. 198.

and related that their interference had been ineffectual, and no further steps were taken. The National Guard remained quiet, waiting the orders of their superiors. Meanwhile, amid this fear or lethargy, for neither the Assembly nor the Guard viewed this butchery with favourable eyes, the judges and executioners ate, drank, and slept, and returned unmolested and with new vigour to their several functions.

The thirst of blood, once indulged, appears to have given rise to a sort of intoxication. The mob attacked even the Bicêtre, a prison containing none but criminals and lunatics. Here only they experienced resistance; and the resistance was desperate. The gaolers made common cause with the prisoners against the assailants; the stones and iron bars of the building supplying them with weapons. They made good their defence until cannon were brought against them, and they were mowed down in the mass.

Of the number of persons who perished in this fearful scene no exact account has ever been given. It is said, however, that not more than 200 or 300 of the prisoners committed for political offences are known to have escaped; and on the smallest reckoning the slain amounted to 2000 or 3000. Some estimate them at double that number. Truchat stated to the Legislative Assembly that 4000 had fallen. One statement, which is introduced only to show the tendency to exaggeration in these matters, raised the number to 12,800. Those who were imprisoned for debt were set free by order of the Commune; and to these we must look to make up the difference between the number of the slain and the total number of 8000, said to have been in prison on September 2. The bodies were interred in trenches, prepared, it is said, beforehand by the Commune, but their bones were subsequently transferred to the Catacombs. "In these melancholy regions, while other relics of mortality lie exposed all around, the remains of those who perished in the massacres of September are alone excluded from the public eye. The vault in which they

repose is closed with a screen of freestone, as if relating to crimes unfit to be thought of even in the proper abode of death, and which France would willingly hide in oblivion."*

* Scott, *Life of Napoleon*, vol. ii. p. 47. The authorities for this account are Mignet, *Hist. de la Révolution Française*; Montgaillard, *Hist. de France*; and Dulaure, as above quoted.

CHAPTER XV.

Character of Cleon—Blockade and Capture of the Lacedæmonians at Pylos—Comparison with the capture of Porto Bello by Admiral Vernon—Greek comedy—Sketch of the Knights of Aristophanes—Subsequent history of Cleon—Account of the Popish Plot—Character and history of Titus Oates—Mutilation of the Hermæ at Athens.

WITHIN very few years after the beginning of the Peloponnesian war, a striking change took place both in the measures and the ministers of the state. Miltiades, Aristides, Themistocles, Cimon, Pericles, were all pre-eminent in personal merit, and most of them possessed of hereditary distinction also. Nicias, a man of rank and virtue, succeeded in appearance to the high station of Pericles, but not to his talents and influence over his turbulent countrymen, who, after having been long governed by the most illustrious of Grecian statesmen, threw themselves into the arms of the worst of Grecian demagogues. After Pericles' death, popular favour veered for a short time between Eucrates, a flax-seller, and Lysicles, a sheep-seller; until a man, low equally in origin, habits, and education, carried away the prize, and employed it, as the folly of his supporters deserved, to the ruin of the state. "The son of a tanner, and himself bred to the trade; without those generous feelings which seem inherent in high birth, and without that regard for character which it is the purpose of education to inspire, Cleon possessed those corporeal powers, which, in the eyes of a mob, often supply the place of both:—with a bulky body, a voice potent even beyond the extreme extent of value attached to such a qualification among the Greeks, with a most republican

indifference to all exterior decorations of person,* and a face bearing on it the marks of vulgar intemperance, Nature herself seems to have formed Cleon for a demagogue. His interior qualifications were just what his exterior promised; he being, as Mr. Mitford observes, 'of extraordinary impudence and little courage; as slack in the field as he was forward and noisy in the assembly, and as base in practice as he was corrupt in principle.' That such a man should ever have stood in the situation of head of a party seems to us almost incredible: but he possessed one redeeming qualification in an eminent degree; and among a nation which pardoned everything to the pleasure of indulging its ears, the coarse but ready eloquence of Cleon, exerted in those ways which were most calculated to please an Athenian audience—in boasts of his own integrity, and accusations of all the respectable men of rank—this formed a splendid addition to his character, which threw into the shade all his other defects.** By this man's persuasion that atrocious decree was passed, which condemned to death every male of the Mityleneans, and reduced to slavery their wives and children: a fate but just averted by the repentance of the Athenians, whose vengeance nevertheless was gratified by the execution of a thousand prisoners. Through his folly and presumption, the opportunity was lost of concluding an honourable and advantageous peace, when good fortune and the military talent of Demosthenes had thrown the Spartan army at Sphacteria into their power. This event, which raised Cleon's popularity to its greatest height, has also made known his character to all ages. His name would have been comparatively little bruited abroad by the grave censure of Thucydides; but the satire of Aristophanes has conferred on it a most undesirable celebrity.

Sphacteria, now called Sphagia,† is a small island

* Mitchell's Aristophanes, vol. i. p. 139.

† With respect to the exact locality of Sphacteria, see the memoir at the end of the second volume of Arnold's Thucydides.

situated in the centre of the mouth of the bay of Pylos, well known in modern history by the name of Navarino, which it nearly closes, leaving a narrow passage on either side. In the year B.C. 425, in the seventh year of the war, the Athenian fleet, under the command of Eurymedon and Demosthenes, raised a small fort at Pylos, intending to garrison it with Messenians, the obstinate and hereditary enemies of Lacedæmon.* The fleet then sailed away, leaving only five ships and their crews, under the command of Demosthenes. The Spartan government immediately sent a force to attack him by land and sea ; and to make the blockade effectual, they placed a body of Lacedæmonians in the island, meaning to close both the inlets of the harbour with their ships. But the Athenian fleet returned in time to save their little garrison ; and a naval victory made them masters of the sea, and of the destiny of the 420 Lacedæmonians thus shut up on the uninhabited and uncultivated island of Sphacteria.

Consternation ran high in Sparta on receiving this news, for many persons of the first families were among the detachment thus entrapped ; and an embassy was sent to Athens to negotiate for peace. A truce was concluded in the first instance, by which the Spartans were still detained on the island, but were to be supplied with a regulated allowance of food ; and advantageous and honourable terms were offered, on which a lasting pacification might be founded. But Cleon induced the Athenians to require more than the Spartans would, or perhaps could, consent to or fulfil. In consequence, hostilities were renewed, and the capture of the Spartans became an object of primary importance. The island was rocky and woody, and it was thought inexpedient to reduce them by force ; a strict blockade was therefore drawn round the island to starve them into submission. But during the truce they probably had husbanded the provision allowed them ; and a scanty supply was introduced by expert swimmers, who dragged after them skins filled

* See vol. i. chap. 2.

with poppy-seed mixed with honey, or bruised linseed, or by boats, which ran for the island on the seaward side in stormy nights, when it was difficult to maintain the blockade : and the Athenians began to be alarmed lest, in the difficulty and uncertainty of a winter blockade, they might lose their prey. The sequel may be best related from Thucydides, and in the following graphic passage of Plutarch, which supplies some curious notices of Cleon :—

“When the people saw that this siege drew out in length, and that their camp suffered grievous wants and necessities, then they fell out with Cleon, and he again burdened Nicias, saying, that through his fear he would let the besieged Spartans escape, and that if he had been captain they should not have held out so long. Thereupon the Athenians said aloud to Cleon, ‘And why dost not thou go thither then to take them?’ Moreover Nicias selfe also rising up, openly gave him his authority to take this Pylos, and bade him levy as many soldiers as he would to go thither, and not to bragg with such impudent words, where there was no danger, but to do some notable service to the commonwealth. Cleon at the first shrunk back, being amazed withal, little thinking they would have taken him so suddenly at his word : but in the end, perceiving the people urged him to it, and that Nicias also was importunate with him, ambition so inflamed him, that he not only took the charge upon him, but in a bravery said, that within twenty days after his departure he would either put all the Spartans to the sword, or bring them prisoners to Athens. The Athenians hearing Cleon say so, had more lust to laugh than to believe that he spake ; for it was their manner ever to laugh at his anger and folly. For it is reported of him, that the people on a time being solemnly assembled in council early in the morning, to hear what Cleon would say, and having tarried long for him, at the length he came with a garland on his head, and prayed the assembly to dismiss the court till the next morning : for (quoth he) I shall not be at leisure to-day, because I have sacrificed, and do feast also certain strangers, my friends, that are

come to see me. So the people burst out in a laughing, and brake up the assembly . . . But herein Nicias did great harm to the commonwealth, suffering Cleon in that sort to grow to credit and estimation. For after that victory Cleon grew to so haughty a mind and pride of himself, that he was not to be dealt withal; whereupon fell out the occasion of the great miseries that happened to the city of Athens, by which Nicias himself was not the smallest sufferer. For Cleon, among other things, took away the modesty and reverence used before in public orations to the people: he of all men was the first that cried out in his orations, that clapped his hand on his thigh, threw open his gowne, and flung up and down the pulpit as he spoke. Of which example afterwards followed all licentiousness and contempt of honesty, the which all the orators and counsellors fell into that dealt in matters of state and commonwealth, and was in the end the overthrow of all together.”*

“Nicias seeing the Athenians to be in a kind of tumult against Cleon, for that when he thought it so easy a matter, he did not presently put it in practice, and seeing also he had upbraided him, willed him to take what strength he would, that they could give him, and undertake it. Cleon, supposing at first that he gave him this leave but in words, was ready to accept it; but when he knew he would give him the authority in good earnest, then he shrunk back, and said, that not he, but Nicias, was general: being now indeed afraid, and hoping that he durst not have given over the office to him. But then Nicias again bade him do it, and gave over his command to him, for so much as concerned Pylos, and called the Athenians to witness it. They (as is the fashion of the multitude), the more Cleon declined the voyage, and went back from his word, pressed Nicias so much the more to resign his power to him, and cried out upon Cleon to go. Insomuch, as not

* North's Plutarch—Nicias. This reference of all the evils which befell Athens to the indecorous behaviour of one speaker is rather characteristic.

knowing how to disengage himself of his word, he undertook the voyage, and stood forth, saying, that he feared not the Lacedæmonians, and that he would not carry any man with him out of the city, but only the Lemnians and Imbrians that were then present, and those targeteers that were come to them from Cœnus, and 400 archers out of other places, and with these, he said, added to the soldiers that were at Pylos already, he would, within twenty days, either fetch away the Lacedæmonians alive, or kill them upon the place.

“This vain speech moved amongst the Athenians some laughter, and was heard with great content of the wiser sort. For of two benefits, the one must needs fall out; either to be rid of Cleon (which was their greatest hope), or if they were deceived in that, then to get those Lacedæmonians into their hands.”*

Cleon sailed accordingly; but in the interim a fire had consumed the woods on the island, and Demosthenes, an able and successful general, was already preparing to attack the Lacedæmonians. Cleon was prudent enough to leave the direction of the assault in his hands. After an obstinate resistance, the Lacedæmonian force at last surrendered, being reduced in number to 292, of whom 120 were Spartans; and within the time prescribed Cleon returned in triumph to Athens with his prisoners. Thucydides says, that no event throughout the war created so much astonishment in Greece as this; it being the general opinion that the Lacedæmonians would not yield up their arms for famine, or for any other extremity, but rather die with them, fighting as they best could.

Since this chapter was written, we have seen, in a work the scanty sale of which says little for the general diffusion of a taste for sound scholarship in England, an ingenious parallel between the remarkable transaction above narrated, and a passage in English history. The work in question, the ‘Philological Museum,’ is likely not to be in the hands of a large proportion of our readers; and instead of merely referring to it, we shall

* Thucyd., iv. 28.

proceed to transcribe a portion of the article in question.

“ Mr. Mitford, in his elaborate narrative of the Peloponnesian war, has drawn a comparison between the military operations of Brasidas in the Athenian dependencies lying towards Thrace, and those of General Wolfe, the hero of Quebec, in Canada. The points of resemblance are very remarkable ; but, as he observes, the differences are also obvious. The parallel is, however, sufficiently close to awaken that interest which all men naturally feel in marking the identity of the human character, under similar circumstances, in ages and countries far removed from each other. Such indications of a common nature connect one generation with another, and bring home to the mind a more lively conception of the past. The parallel about to be drawn fetches one of its subjects from the same period of Grecian history, so fertile in remarkable men and striking incidents. If, in Mr. Mitford’s case, the points of difference be thought to outweigh those of resemblance, it may perhaps be said, that in the following comparison the preponderance is exactly reversed. It is needless to give a second account of what we have fully described, the transactions at Sphacteria, and the singular arrangement between Cleon and Nicias.” After a short notice of these events, the author continues : “ The people applaud Cleon’s bold proposal, and insist on his going to redeem his word, whether he would or not. He goes, and is completely successful, bringing the captives to Athens within the specified twenty days. The applause of the citizens exceeded all moderation, with which party spirit had perhaps something to do. Cleon was esteemed a first-rate general, and accordingly sent out to match the incomparable Brasidas.

“ The temper of the English public, at the period to which we are about to refer, is well evinced by the uncommon popularity of Glover’s ballad, entitled Admiral Hosier’s Ghost, which was a political squib. Hosier had been sent out to protect the West Indian trade against the Spaniards, who were a terror to our merchantmen in

those seas. Their principal station was Porto Bello ; off which accordingly Hosier cruised. But he had instructions not to make aggressions on the enemy ; and he remained inactive at sea, insulted and despised by the Spaniards, till his crews became diseased, and he at last died of a broken heart. He was a brave sailor, but his orders kept him inactive. This state of things, so disgraceful to our naval power, continued till 1739 ; when Admiral Vernon, who was a fierce and not ineloquent assailant in debate, and the delight of his party in the House of Commons from his blunt impudence and harassing hostility to Ministers, came prominently before the public. He was esteemed a pretty good officer ; but his boisterous manner in the house was his principal recommendation. In a debate on the Spanish depredations, which still continued unrepressed, he chanced to affirm that Porto Bello might be easily taken, if the officers did their duty ; and led on by the ardour of debate, he even pledged himself to capture the place, with only six ships of war, if they would put him in command. The opposition re-echoed his proposal. Vernon was called by anticipation a Drake and a Raleigh ; and his popularity no bounds. The minister, Sir R. Walpole, glad to appease the popular clamour, and to get rid for a time of Vernon's busy opposition in the Commons ; and hoping perhaps, like Nicias, that by the failure of his boast he would disgrace himself and his party, or else clear the seas of the Spaniards ; closed with the offer so lightly made, and actually sent him out with a fleet to the West Indies. Vernon sailed, and was as good as his word. He speedily took Porto Bello, and demolished all the fortifications. Both houses joined in an address ; Vernon rose to the highest pitch of popularity ; and the ' nation in general (observes the historian) was wonderfully elated by an exploit, which was magnified much above its merit.' A Sacheverel or a Vernon are quite sufficient pillars for a party to rear a triumphal arch upon.

"The extraordinary performance of an extravagant boast, under circumstances unexpectedly favourable, is

not more observable in both cases, than the speedy exposure of the inability of both commanders, when subsequently put to the test. The hero of Sphacteria at the head of a brave army in Thrace, with which he did not know what to do* next, like a chess-player who does not see his next move, is absolutely ludicrous. The conduct of the conqueror of Porto Bello, when intrusted with a powerful fleet on a larger field of action, is equally decisive of his real merits. He failed most miserably as admiral on the West India station; thus showing that a *coup de main*, whether in politics or war, though it often succeed most signally, is no safe evidence of general ability."†

Fortified as to our facts by the authority of history, we may proceed, after this digression, to develop the chief object of this chapter, which is to give a sketch of one of the most remarkable productions of Greek literature, the 'Knights' of Aristophanes, and to exhibit the Aristophanic Cleon, who, even after this preface, will surprise those who are unacquainted with him. We shall not be at a loss to find a parallel for him in our own history. To Cleon and his politics Aristophanes was violently opposed. Much undeserved obloquy has been thrown in times past upon this poet: it is now pretty generally acknowledged that the heaviest charges against him are undeserved: that he saw clearly what were the true interests of his country, and feared not to tell his turbulent countrymen their faults to their face. The medicine indeed required to be disguised to render it palatable, and we must regret that the vehicle employed was such as to render it disgusting to modern delicacy: but the fault of this lay partly in the state of society in which the poet lived; the courage, the clear-sightedness, and the brilliant talent are his own peculiar glory.

The Grecian comedy is a delicate and difficult subject to touch upon: for to those who are unacquainted with the original, abstracts and translations present little more

* Thucyd. v. 7.

† Philological Museum, vol. ii. p. 706.

than the lifeless form in its somewhat startling extravagance. Of the wit, the greatest part must evaporate, and the remainder requires, in order to be relished, some familiarity with the manners to which it refers. The Grecian drama had its origin in religion. In the worship of Dionysius, or Bacchus, one of the earliest of the Grecian deities, it was usual to introduce two sorts of poetry; the one lofty and panegyrical, the other ludicrous and satirical. As these rude attempts acquired extent and polish, they separated in character more and more widely: until the former acquired the exalted and highly reverential cast which we see in the tragedies of *Æschylus*; while the latter retained its original features, more pleasing to a deity who is mythologically represented as inspiring and partaking the most fantastic rites of his followers, and as being offended by nothing except sobriety or gravity. Extravagance and indecency therefore became a religious duty, and one that the Athenians fulfilled with pious fervour. The drama was a matter of public interest; plays were performed, not daily, but upon the festivals of Bacchus, in the early spring,* in theatres of vast extent, with all the magnificence and effect which anxious care and unsparing expense could produce; judges were appointed by the public to decide upon the merits of the pieces represented, and the prize of victory was sought with an eagerness totally disproportioned, according to modern notions, to the object in view.

In co-operation with the author, certain persons, called *Choragi*, were appointed by law, at whose expense the Chorus was provided, and carefully instructed in the parts which they were to perform. Upon the taste and liberality of the *Choragus* the success of the author mainly depended; and if successful, he consecrated to Bacchus a tripod inscribed with his own name, that of the author, and of the magistrate who gave his name to the year. The modern drama possesses nothing which resembles the Chorus. We have already noticed the re-

* *Mus. Crit.* vol. ii. p. 75, *seq.*

ligious songs from which theatrical entertainments were derived. The first step to their improvement was the introduction of some mythological narration by another person to relieve the singer; the second, the conversion of this narrative into dialogue, by the introduction of a second actor. For some time the original Bacchic song maintained its ground in the intervals of recitation; but at length the lyrical part was made to bear upon the rest of the performance, and as a taste for splendour was developed, the number of singers was increased from one to three, fifteen, or even a greater number.* In the advanced state of the art the Chorus bore marks of its original constitution, being still regarded as a single actor, and mingling in the dialogue by means of its Coryphæus, or leader. In tragedy it was composed of old men, maidens, or any class of persons who were interested in the catastrophe of the piece: the comic poets took a wider range, and availed themselves of the boldest personifications which they thought likely to produce effect. Thus in one play of Aristophanes there is a Chorus of Clouds, in another of Birds, in another of Frogs, in another of Wasps, which were all so habited as to bear some vague resemblance to the things they personated, in a manner which such as recollect a pantomime of no very old date, called Harlequin and the Queen Bee, will be at no loss to comprehend. The introductory scenes of our pantomimes often seem to imitate these freaks of Grecian comedy; as for instance, in Harlequin Gulliver, where the inhabitants of the dog-star, as described by another eminent traveller, Baron Munchausen, came in to sing; also a chorus of men with their heads under their shoulders. And indeed the latter scenes of pantomime, by retrenching the practical jokes, and by the introduction of dialogue, might be made to bear considerable resemblance to Grecian comedy. Grimaldi's parody of the dagger-scene in Macbeth, although principally aimed at a particular

* Mus. Crit., vol. ii. p. 207.

actor, was a capital parallel to the pitiless pelting of wit carried on by the comedians of Athens against the tragedians, and against each other.

No history of the gradual formation of comedy has come down to us, but in the time of Aristophanes we find her possessed of most extraordinary privileges, and availing herself of them to the extremity of licence. To laugh was the grand object of the audience, and any thing was tolerated which led to this conclusion. The slang of the port and the market, the pleadings of the law courts, the peculiar language of handicrafts, were all carefully studied and profusely introduced, in combination with the grossest buffoonery and indecency, and the most unsparing personal abuse. In a town like Athens, the population of which, though large, was crowded within a narrow space and almost living in the open air, a joke directed against the peculiarities, corporeal or moral, of any person of any sort of notoriety, was pretty sure to be understood, and if understood, quite sure to be relished. Masks were always worn by the actors, and if a living character was brought on the stage the mask was a portrait. Unlucky poets, public defaulters, speculators, and notorious profligates, formed the stock in trade common to all comedians; and a more exceptionable source of amusement was found in the unrestrained indulgence of private malevolence. Even the sacred persons of the gods were fair game; and Bacchus, the patron of the festival, was made to minister to the amusement of his riotous worshippers as the earliest Captain Bobadil upon record.* Such are the features of the elder Grecian comedy, confirmed by, and indeed mainly derived from the works of Aristophanes, the only comedian of whom a perfect specimen remains.†

* See the *Frogs*.

† Comedy is divided by the Grecian critics into three branches; the old, the middle, and the new. Of the two latter we know little, since the works of Aristophanes, the only perfect comedies extant, belong, with one exception, to the first. It would be foreign to our purpose to enter here

After this exposition the reader may be surprised at the respectful terms in which we have above spoken of him. But it is pretty certain that he saw clearly the true interests of his country; and there is good ground for thinking that four at least of the eleven plays now extant were written with the express view of improving its policy, or, strange as it may appear, of correcting its morals; while through them all the national faults of the Athenians are lashed with an unsparing and somewhat dangerous severity. To argue this question would transport us far from our subject, from which indeed we have already wandered wide, and far beyond our limits: and is the less necessary because it has already been fully argued in works of easy access (Mitchell, *Prelim. Discourse*; Schlegel, *Lectures on History of Literature*, *Observer*). On the literary merits of Aristophanes all are agreed. For power and variety of versification, he stands unrivalled; for command of the noble language in which he wrote, he is perhaps unmatched, except by Plato. His wit it would be superfluous to praise; unfortunately it is too often exercised on subjects which endure not an English dress. Nothing perhaps approaches so nearly to the usual style of his dialogue as the less refined parts of Shakspeare's comedies, but the latter want that political design which, pervading the Grecian, inclines us to forget the means in the end, and are in other respects

into a description of them; but it may be generally stated that they were of a milder character; the licence of personality was gradually retrenched, and with it, the political importance of the stage. The lines of distinction cannot be drawn with much precision, but the former of them seems to commence early in the fourth century B.C., the latter in the reign of Alexander, which began B.C. 336. The total loss of the new comedy, and especially of Menander, is perhaps the greatest that classic literature has sustained. It appears from the remaining fragments to have been of a highly polished and moral cast. But a good idea of its general form and tendency may be derived from Plautus and Terence, of whose plays several are little more than translations from it.

scarcely equal to the comparison. But amidst all this ribaldry he often breaks out in a vein of pure and exalted poetry, sufficient to show that he was capable of excelling in the most elegant or dignified departments of the art, had the temper of his countrymen been such as to profit by or allow a hearing to serious admonition.

One of his most celebrated comedies, 'The Knights,' is directed expressly to destroy the popularity of Cleon. The danger incurred by the author is evident from an anecdote related by himself, that no maskmaker could be induced to furnish a likeness of the demagogue.* And as no actor would perform the part, the poet himself made his first appearance on the stage in it, his face rubbed with vermilion, or the lees of wine, to imitate Cleon's complexion, and serve in some degree for a disguise. The plot, if we may call it such, is mainly founded on the transactions at Pylos, already related, and the characters are selected accordingly.

Nicias, Demosthenes, and Cleon figure as slaves of Demus, literally "the people," who represents the Athenian as John Bull does the English nation. The only other character is an itinerant sausage-seller. The chorus is composed of knights or horsemen, the richer class of citizens, who were obliged to keep a horse and be prepared for the cavalry service. Demosthenes and Nicias appear in the first scene, and complain bitterly of a certain Paphlagonian; such is the country which the poet has assigned to Cleon, whom their master has lately brought home, partly, according to the Scholiast (Knights; verse 2), for the sake of an untranslatable pun, partly because the Paphlagonians had the reputation of making the worst-conditioned slaves of all who came to the Athenian market. After some quibbling they agree to submit their case to the spectators, and Demosthenes states it as follows:†—

* * Knights, line 231, ed. Bekk., see the Scholia. It was usual for authors to perform a part in their own comedies. Aristophanes had not hitherto complied with this custom.

† The following extracts are from Mr. Mitchell's translation; to whom apology is due for occasional omissions, where

With reverence to your worships, 'tis our fate
 To have a testy, cross-grained, bilious, sour
 Old fellow for our master ; one much given
 To a bean diet ; * somewhat hard of hearing :
 Demus his name, sirs, of the parish Pnyx† here.
 Some three weeks back or so, this lord of ours
 Brought back a scoundrel slave from Paphlagonia,
 Fresh from the tan-yard, with as foul a mouth
 As ever yet paid tribute to the gallows.
 This tanner‡ Paphlagonian (for the fellow
 Wanted not penetration) bowed and scraped,
 And fawned, and wagged his ears and tail dog-fashion,
 And thus soon slipped into the old man's graces.
 Occasional douceurs of leather parings,
 With speeches to this tune, made all his own :
 " Good sir, the court is up—you've judged one cause,
 'Tis time to take the bath ; allow me, sir—
 This cake is excellent—pray sup this broth—
 You love an obolus, pray take these three—
 Honour me, sir, with your commands for supper."
 Sad times meanwhile for us!—With prying looks
 Round comes my man of hides, and if he finds us
 Cooking a little something for our master,
 Incontinently lays his paw upon it,
 And modestly, in his own name, presents it.
 It was but t'other day, these hands had mixed
 A Spartan pudding for him,—there, at Pylos,
 Slily and craftily the knave stole on me,

the allusions would have required a large body of notes to render them generally intelligible, without being necessary to the general effect of the passage, and a few slight alterations.

* The Athenian judges used beans in giving their votes. Each received three obols, about five-pence, for his fee, and in one of the courts the common number of judges was from two to five hundred or more. The poorer classes made a livelihood in this way, and hence there sprung an extraordinary love of litigation, which Aristophanes is continually satirizing. The 'Wasps' is expressly directed against it.

† Pnyx, the place of general assembly. It was filled with stone seats, to which reference will be made hereafter.

‡ Cleon's father was a tanner, and the poet is continually twitting him with his dirty trade.

Ravished the feast, and to my master bore it.
 Then none but he, forsooth, must wait at table :
 (We dare not come in sight) anon the knave
 Chaunts out his oracles, and when he sees
 The old man plunged in mysteries to the ears,
 And scared from his few senses, marks the time,
 And enters on his tricks. False accusations
 Now come in troops, and at their heels the whip.
 Meanwhile the rascal shuffles in among us,
 And begs of one, browbeats another, cheats
 A third, and frightens all. "My honest friends,
 These cords cut deep, you'll find it—I say nothing—
 Judge you between your purses and your backs ;
 I could perhaps—" We take the gentle hint,
 And give him all ; if not, the old man's foot
 Plays such a tune upon our hinder parts —
 Wherefore (to Nicias) befits it that we think what course
 To take, or where to look for help.

Mitchell, p. 161-4.

The remedy however baffles their ingenuity, till Demosthenes, through the inspiration of the wine-flask, sends his comrade to steal from Cleon, who is asleep within, a certain book of oracles which he hoards with especial care. They are happily secured and handed over to Demosthenes, whose activity is all along contrasted with the indecision of Nicias. After repeated application for more wine to clear his understanding, he at last condescends to enlighten his companion's impatience.

Dem. (reading.) So, so, thou varlet of a Paphlagonian !
 'Twas this bred such distrust in thee, and taught
 To hoard these prophecies.

Nic. Say you ?

Dem. I say

Here is a prophecy, which tells the time
 And manner of this fellow's death.

Nic. Out with it.

Dem. (reading.) The words are clear enough, says my
 oracle,

There shall arise within our state a lint-seller,*
 And to his hands the state shall be committed.

* Euerates.

Nic. One seller note we :—good, proceed, what follows ?

Dem. (*reading.*) Him shall a sheep-seller succeed.*

Nic. A brace

Of sellers, good.—What shall befall this worthy ?

Dem. (*reading.*) "It is fixed that he bear sway till one arise
More wicked than himself—that moment seals him.

Then comes the Paphlagonian—the hide-seller—

The man of claws, whose voice outroars Cycloborns.†

Nic. The man of sheep then falls beneath the lord
Of hides !

Dem. Even so ; thus runs the oracle.

Nic. Another and another still succeeds,
And all are sellers ! sure the race must be
Extinct !

Dem. One yet is left whose craft may stir
Your wonder.

Nic. What his name ?

Dem. Won'dst learn ?

Nic. Aye marry.

Dem. I give it to thee then : the man that rains
The Paphlagonian is—a sausage-seller.

Mitchell, p. 170-2.

A person exercising this lofty vocation is now seen approaching and is eagerly hailed, as sent at this moment by the especial favour of the gods. Their fated deliverer, however, is a modest man, and cannot easily be led to believe the high destiny that awaits him. I am a sausage-seller, he says ; how should I become a man ? Demosthenes assures him that the qualities belonging to his profession—impudence and cheating—are precisely those to which his greatness is to be owing : but still failing to overcome his scruples, he is led to suspect the sausage-seller of the unpardonable fault of having some taint of gentility in his extraction. Satisfied on this point, he proceeds to expound the oracles. The incipient statesman yields to their predictions, and readily receives instructions for his public life. "The oracles indeed do flatter me ; but I wonder how I shall be able

* *Lysicles.*

† A mountain torrent of Attica.

to take charge of the people." The answer is addressed to his professional experience.

Dem. Nought easier : model you upon your trade.
Deal with the people as with sausages—
Twist, implicate, embroil ; nothing will hurt
So you but make your court to Demus, cheating
And soothing him with terms of kitchen science ;
All other public talents are your own :
Your voice is strong, your liver white, and you are
O' the market—say, could Diffidence ask more
To claim the reins of state ?

Mitchell, p. 180. 3

Cleon now comes on the stage, with the usual cry, "The commonwealth is in danger," and is immediately followed by the Chorus, who attack him in an indignant burst, which defies translation. A long scene of abuse and recrimination follows for near three hundred lines, in the course of which every art and trade is made to contribute to the contest of abuse, till Cleon at length accuses his rival of having received ten talents as a bribe. "What then," he replies, "will you take one of them to hold your tongue?" "That he will, and gladly," replies the Chorus : "see, the wind is going down already." The satire was the keener, because Cleon had recently been fined five talents on a conviction for bribery.* At length, being somewhat worsted, he leaves the stage, with the threat of denouncing to the council "the nightly meetings in the city, and conspiracies with the Medes and Bœotians," in which his tormentors are engaged. The sausage-seller follows to countermine him, and the stage is left clear for the Parabasis, or customary address of

* It has been generally said that Cleon lost his popularity and incurred this fine in consequence of the representation of the Knights ; but there is no authority for the former supposition, and the latter is disproved by the mention of this fine in the opening of the *Acharnians*, acted the year before, in the sixth year of the Peloponnesian war. The prosecution was conducted by the Knights ; which probably led to the mistake.

the Chorus to the audience. This was generally unconnected with the play, and served as an opportunity for the author to deliver his sentiments upon all things and all people. It was chiefly satirical, but in Aristophanes is usually intermixed with passages of a highly poetical cast, which strike the more from being introduced by a change in the metre. We cannot shorten or garble it, and the passage is too long, and would be too unintelligible, to be given entire.* At the close of it, the sausage-seller returns, to acquaint his anxious friends with his success.

Saus. Straight as he went from hence, I clapt all sail
And followed close behind. Within I found him
Launching his bolts, and thunder-driving words,
Denouncing all the knights as traitors, vile
Conspirators—jags, crags, and masses huge
Of stone were nothing to the monstrous words
His foaming mouth heaved up. All this to hear
Did the grave council seriously incline;
They love a tale of scandal in their hearts,
And his had been as quick in birth as golden-herb :
Mustard was in their faces, and their brows
With frowns were furrowed up. I saw the storm,
Marked how his words had sunk upon them, taking
Their very senses prisoners :—and oh !
In knavery's name thought I,—by all the fools,
And scrubs, and rogues, and scoundrels in the town—
By that same market, where my early youth
Received its first instruction, let me gather
True courage now : be oil upon my tongue,
And shameless impudence direct my speech.
Just as these thoughts passed over me, I heard
A sound of thunder pealing on my right.†
I marked the omen—grateful, kissed the ground,
And pushing briskly through the lattice-work,
Raised my voice to its highest pitch, and thus
Began upon them : “Messieurs of the Senate,

* In the original it occupies altogether more than 100 lines in a play of 1400.

† Thunder from the right hand was an omen of good fortune. See the original, ver. 639.

I bring good news, and hope your favour for it.
 Anchovies, such as since this war began,
 Ne'er crossed my eyes for cheapness, do this day
 Adorn our markets."—At the words, a calm
 Came over every face, and all was hushed.
 A crown* was voted me upon the spot.
 Then I (the thought was of the moment's birth)
 Making a mighty secret of it, bade them
 Put pans and pots in instant requisition,
 And then—one obol loads you with anchovies.
 Then rose the clap of hands, and every face
 Gaped into mine, in idiot vacancy.
 My Paphlagonian, seeing by what words
 The council best were pleased, thus uttered him :
 "Sirs, Gentlemen, 't is my good will and pleasure
 That for this kindly news, we sacrifice†
 One hundred oxen to our patron goddess."
 Straight the tide turned, each head within the senate
 Nodded assent, and warm good will to Cleon.
 What! shall a little bull-flesh gain the day,
 Thought I within me: then aloud, and shouting
 Beyond his mark: I double, sirs, this vote;
 Nay, more, sirs, should to-morrow's sun see sprats
 One hundred to the penny sold, I move
 That we make offering of a thousand goats‡
 Unto Diana. Every head was raised,
 And all turned eyes on me. This was a blow
 He ne'er recovered: straight he fell to words
 Of idle import, and the officers
 Were now upon him. All meantime was uproar
 In th' assembly—nought talked of but anchovies—
 How fared our statesman? he with suppliant tones
 Begged a few moments' pause; Rest ye, sirs, rest ye

* A crown or chaplet was the usual reward of such persons as brought good news.

† A sacrifice and a public feast were synonymous, for only a small portion of the victims were offered to the gods.

‡ "The sausage-seller in Aristophanes promises to offer a thousand goats to Artemis Agrotera (outbidding in jest the offering of thanks for the battle of Marathon), whenever a hundred trichides, a small kind of fish, were sold for an obolus, which was therefore an impossibility." Boeckh, Public Economy of Athens.

A while—I have a tale will pay the hearing—
 A herald brings from Sparta terms of peace,
 And craves to utter them before you. “Peace!”
 Cried all (their voices one), “is this a time
 To talk of peace?—out, dotard! What, the rogues
 Have heard the price anchovies sell for! Peace!
 Who cares for peace now? let the war go on;
 And, chairman, break the assembly up.” ’T was done—
 On every side, one moment clears the rails!
 I the mean time steal privately away
 And buy me all the leeks and coriander
 In the market: these I straight make largess of,
 And gratis give, as sauce to dress their fish.
 Who may recount the praises infinite,
 And groom-like courtesies this bounty gained me!
 In short, you see a man, that for one pennyworth
 Of coriander vile, has purchased him
 An entire senate: not a man among them
 But is at my behest, and does me reverence.

Mitchell, p. 217, 221.

So soon as the Chorus has expressed its high satisfaction, Cleon enters, and the war of words is renewed with equal spirit, till he calls upon Demus to appear, and see what ill treatment he suffers on his account. Demus hears the candidates for his favour, and resolves to call an assembly to decide on their claims; but he insists that it shall be held in his proper seat, the Pnyx, to the dismay of the sausage-seller, who exclaims that he is ruined; since Demus, though a clever fellow anywhere else, is a gaping ninny when he gets on one of those stone benches.* However, there is no help for it; the scene changes to the Pnyx, and the sausage-seller makes a favourable impression by presenting to Demus a cushion to keep him from the bare stone, with a most pathetic reference to his exploits at Salamis;† a subject in reference to which the Athenians would swallow any

* The seats in the Pnyx.

† *κατὰ καθίζου μαλακῶς ἵνα μὴ τρίβῃς τὴν ἐν Σαλαμῖνι, v. 783.* That the respected member on which the chief stress of the battle of Salamis had fallen, might be exempt in future from all common friction.

amount of flattery. Having gained the ear of the court, he exposes the mischievous tendency of Cleon's warlike politics, all the gain of which was his own, while the evil and inconvenience were the portion of Demus. This produces an effect which all the protestations of Cleon cannot remove. "You that profess such devotion," continues his enemy, "did you ever, out of all the hides you sell, give him so much as a pair of shoes?" "Not he, indeed," replies Demus. A pair is immediately presented, and the provident donor receives the grateful assurance, that of all men living he is the best friend to the people, the city, "and to my toes." This specimen will probably be sufficient: the result is altogether favourable to the sausage-seller, who is put in possession of Cleon's signet of office. The latter still has a resource: he appeals to his favourite oracles; but even here he meets with his match. They both quit the stage, and return laden.

Demus. What may you bear?

Cleon. Predictions, oracles.

Demus. What, all!

Cleon. Now you

Admire, and yet a chest filled to the brim
Is left behind.

Saus. I have a garret stored
With them, and eke two dwelling-chambers whole.

Demus. And who has worded these?

Cleon. Mine come from Bacis.*

Demus (to Saus.) And yours?

Saus. From Glanis, sir, his elder brother.

Demus. Now mould them for my ears.

Cleon. It shall be done, sir.

(*Reads.*) In Athens the sacred, a cry's heard for help,
A woman's in labour—a lion her whelp.

* Bacis was an ancient Bœotian seer of high reputation, who prophesied the Persian invasion among other things: see Herod. viii. 77. The name and existence of Glanis, like the oracles to be produced, is a ready fiction of the sausage-seller.

For warfare he's born, and will fight by the great,
 With the ants, and the gnats, and the vermin of state.
 On gratitude rests it this wall to environ
 With a wall of stout wood, and a tarret of iron.

Demus. Dost reach him? (to *Saus.*)

Saus. Sir, not I.

Cleon. And yet the god

Speaks clear. I am the lion, and I claim
 Protection,

Demus. Good; his words sure stand with reason.
 Who else may plead a lion's teeth and claws!*

Saus. Aye, but he sinks the iron wall and wood,
 Where Phœbus wills that you hold guard of him;
 And thus he falsifies the exposition.

Demus. And how do you expound it?

Saus. By the wood

And iron wall, I understand the pillory:
 The oracle enjoins he takes his place there.

Demus. And I subscribe me to its pleasure.

Cleon. Nay,

Not so, the envious crows are croaking round me.

But another prediction awaits my lord's ear,
 'T is Phœbus that warns—"of Cyllene beware."

Demus. Cyllene,† Cyllene, how this understand? (to
Saus.)

Saus. Cyllene is lameness, and means a lame hand,
 To Cleon's apply it: as with bruise or with maim
 Still 't is bent with—your honour, drop gift in the same.

Cleon. I have seen me a vision: I've dreamed me a
 dream;

Its author was Pallas, and Demus its theme;
 The cup aryœna† blazed broad in her hand,
 And plenty and riches fell wide o'er the land.

* We are not answerable for the fidelity of Mr. Mitchell's translation of this, or of some other lines. The corresponding line in the original is indeed hardly susceptible of translation.

† A city of Arcadia. A word of similar sound means "lame."

‡ The Grecians indulged their luxury in the article of drinking-vessels in an extravagant degree, and every sort of

Saus. I too have my visions and dreams of the night:
Our lady* and owl stood confest to my sight;
From the cup aryballas choice blessings she threw.

(*To Cleon.*) On him fell tan pickle, and nectar on you.
(*to Demus.*)

Here ends the contest of oracles; and Demus, after expressing his opinion that there never was a wiser man than Glanis, commits himself to the guidance and instruction of the sausage-seller. He is induced to pause, however, by the offers which Cleon makes, of supplying his table with provisions, and finally comes to the resolution of "giving the reins of the Pnyx" to which soever of the two candidates shall offer the most acceptable bribes. They quit the stage, each endeavouring to get the advantage in a false start; and the Chorus comes forward with an address to Demus.

Chorus. Honour, power, and high estate,
Demus, mighty lord, hast thou;
To thy sceptre small and great
In obeisance lowly bow!

Yet you're easy to his hand, whoever cringes;
Every fool you gape upon,
Every speech your ear hath won,
While your wits move off and on
Their hinges.

Demus (surlily). Hinges in their teeth, who deem
That Demus is an easy fool;
If he yawn, and if he dream,
If he tittle, 't is by rule.

'T is his way to keep in pay a knave to ease him;
Him he keeps for guide and gull,
But when once the sponge is full,
To himself the knave he'll pull,

And squeeze him.†
Mitchell, p. 250, 262.

cup had its peculiar appellation. There is no allusion contained in the names introduced here.

* Pallas, the tutelary deity of Athens.

† *Ros.* Take you me for a sponge, my lord?

Hamlet. Aye, sir, that soaks up the king's countenance, his

They return laden with all sorts of eatables. "The sausage-seller has the advantage of his rival for some time in his presents, till Cleon awakens his fears by talking of a dish of hare, which he has exclusively to present. His rival, disconcerted at first, has recourse to a stratagem. 'Some ambassadors come this way, *and their purses seem well filled.*' 'Where are they?' exclaims Cleon eagerly, and turns about. The hare-flesh was immediately in the hands of his rival, who presents the boasted dainty in his own name to Demus, and casts the old affair of Pylos in the disappointed Cleon's teeth.*

"While the sausage-seller piously refers the suggestion of this little theft to Minerva, and modestly takes the execution only to himself, Cleon resents the surprise very warmly. 'I had all the danger of catching the hare,' says he. 'I had all the trouble of dressing it,' says his rival. 'Fools,' says Demus, 'I care not who caught it, nor who dressed it; all I regard is the hand which serves it up to table.' The sausage-seller proposes a new test of affection. 'Let our chests be searched; it will then be proved who is the better man towards Demus and his stomach.' This is accordingly done. That of the new candidate for power is found empty. 'He had given his dear little grandfather every thing;' and the person so benefited signifies his approbation. 'This chest is well disposed towards

rewards, his authorities. But such officers do the king best service in the end. He keeps them, like an ape, in the corner of his jaw; first mouthed, to be last swallowed. When he needs what you have gleaned, it is but squeezing, and then, sponge, you shall be dry again.—*Hamlet*, iv. 2.

Mr. Mitchell's translation is plainly modelled on this passage; and is more like that than the original. Vespasian is said to have promoted the most rapacious collectors to the highest offices, "whom he was commonly said to use as *sponges*, that he might squeeze them out when they had sucked up enough.—*Sueton.* c. 16.

* Where he had served Demosthenes the same trick, see p. 232-3.

Demus.' In Cleon's is found abundance of all good things; and a tempting cheese-cake particularly excites Demus's surprise. 'The rogue,' says this representative of the sovereign multitude, 'to conceal such a prodigious cheese-cake as this, and to cut me off with a mere morsel of it.' Cleon in vain pleads, that he stole it for the good of his country. He is ordered to lay down his chaplet,* and invest his antagonist with it. Nay, says he, still struggling for the retention of office,"

Cleon. I have an oracle: it came from Phœbus,
And tells to whom Fate wills I yield the mastery.

Saus. Declare the name; my life upon't, the god
Refers to me.

Cleon. Presumptuous! you! low scoundrel!
To the proof;—where were you schooled, and who the
teacher

That first imbued your infant mind with knowledge?

Saus. The kitchen and the scullery gave me breeding;
And teachers I had none, save blows and cuffs.

Cleon. My mind misgives me.

But pass we on; say further, what the wrestling-master
Instructed you?

Saus. To steal; to look the injured
Full in the face, and then forswear the theft.

Cleon. One only hope remains. Resolve me, practised
you
Within the market-place, or at the gates?†

Saus. Nay, at the gates, among the men who deal
In salted fish.

Cleon. All is accomplished:
It is the will of heaven:—bear me within.
Farewell! a long farewell to all my greatness!
Adieu, fair chaplet! 'gainst my will I quit thee,
And give thy matchless sweets to other hands!

* Cleon had received a chaplet in full assembly from the people.

† The lowest tradesmen only took their stand at the gates of the town: every answer is made to show the utter baseness of Cleon's rival, and thus to place himself in the most ignominious light.

There may be knaves more fortunate than I,
But never shall the world see thief more rascally.*

Saus. (devoutly.) Thine be triumph, Jove Ellanian !†
p. 269-73.

The Chorus now enters upon an address, first in praise of the equestrian order, and then proceeding to satirize individuals by name. Meanwhile Demus is undergoing a thorough purgation under the hands of the sausage-seller. He reappears "in his former splendour of the days of Miltiades and Aristides," delivers a recantation of his former principles, and concludes the piece by confirming the appointment of the sausage-seller to Cleon's place, and investing Cleon solemnly with the tray, and other implements of the sausage-seller.

To those who are disappointed in the specimen here given of the wit and humour of Aristophanes, we have only to suggest in defence of our author, that a large proportion of the most remarkable passages have been omitted, on account of the impossibility of rendering them intelligible, even by a prolix commentary, to those who cannot read the original; and that our description of the 'Knights' is but a set of fragments from a translation, which professes its inability to render its original as a whole. And we may quote, as much more applicable to this short attempt than to the work to which it is prefixed, the singularly happy and modest motto of Mr. Mitchell's translation, applicable as it must be to all translations, but especially to those of Aristophanes.

Among the rest, he culled me out a root;
The leaf was darkish, and had prickles on it;
And in another country, as he said,
Bore a bright golden flower, *but not in this soil.*
Comus.

* Parodied from Euripides' description of the dying Alcestis taking leave of her bridal bed, v. 181.

† Jupiter, the protector of Greece.

In the Parabasis to the Clouds, performed two years after the Knights, the poet refers with pride to his attack on Cleon at his highest; but though he returns to the charge once and again, he makes no mention of any fine imposed upon him; which is in itself almost a sufficient refutation of the story mentioned in a previous note. The play was so relished as to gain the first prize, but there is not a jot of evidence to show that Cleon's popularity was overclouded by it. Happily his reign only lasted for two years after it. His success at Pylus flattered him into a belief in his talents for war, and he took the command of the army in Thrace, opposed to Brasidas, the best Spartan general of his day. His incapacity lost the Athenians a battle, but the generals on both sides were slain; and the death of their greatest nuisance at home, and their worst enemy abroad, was an ample recompense for the injury incurred by his rashness. "When both Cleon and Brasidas were slain, the which on either side were most opposite to the peace: the one for that he had good success and honour in the war; the other, because in quiet times his evil actions would the more appear, and his calumniation be the less believed,"* peace, though of brief duration, was almost immediately concluded.

That Cleon should have succeeded to the influence of Pericles may well surprise the reader. But a very slight inequality will turn the course of a rapid current to the undermining of its own banks; and in like manner, when men's minds are deeply moved, things in quiet times contemptible may acquire influence and importance commensurate with the force of that which they are enabled, by no intrinsic qualities, to control. By no other considerations can we explain—to justify it is impossible—the extravagance of terror and fury into which England was once goaded by a man, who for knavery and impudence may match the Athenian demagogue, and who, for some time, bore equal sway over the minds of his countrymen, Titus Oates, the dis-

* Thucyd. v. 16.

coverer, and probably the inventor of the Popish Plot. Some excuse is to be found in the political circumstances of the times; in the belief that the King adhered secretly to the Romish faith, as the Duke of York openly professed it; and especially in the known fact that the sovereign of Britain was pensioned by France, that he might dispense with parliaments, and the more easily establish himself on an absolute throne. The high character of many who promoted the inquiry is a sufficient warrant that they were actuated by no unworthy motives. But the revolting narrative of murders committed under form of law by perjured witnesses and corrupt judges, will remain for ever a blot in our history; a warning against adding gall to bitterness; against aggravating political dissension by religious discord.

The first information of the plot was given by one Dr. Tongue, in August, 1678; but the King, who was by no means deficient in penetration, pronounced it to be a forgery, and it might have slept for ever, had not the Duke of York, whose confessor was implicated, judged an inquiry necessary to clear himself from all suspicion. Tongue professed to have his information from Oates, and having brought the principal actor on the stage, took no further part in the action of the piece. On Michaelmas-eve Oates was examined before the council, and deposed to the existence of a most extensive conspiracy among the Jesuits to murder the King. He indicated Coleman, formerly secretary to the Duke of York, and at that time to the Duchess, as being acquainted with all the schemes under consideration. The effect of this announcement is thus described by a most amiable and unprejudiced contemporary.

“October 1, 1678. The parliament and the whole nation were alarmed about a conspiracy of some eminent Papists, for the destruction of the King, and introduction of Popery, discovered by one Oates and Dr. Tongue, which last I knew. I went to see and converse with him at Whitehall, with Mr. Oates, one that was lately an apostate to the church of Rome, and now returned again with this discovery. He seemed to be a bold man,

and, in my thoughts, furiously indiscreet; but every body believed what he said, and it quite changed the genius and motions of the parliament, growing now corrupt, and interested with long sitting and court practices: but with all this, Popery would not go down. This discovery turned them all as one man against it, and nothing was done but to find out the depth of this. Oates was encouraged, and every thing he affirmed taken for gospel. The truth is, the Roman Catholics were exceedingly bold and busy everywhere, since the Duke forbore to go any longer to the chapel."*

Coleman had notice of his danger, and secreted a part, but not the whole, of his papers. The remainder were seized, and clearly proved that he had maintained a correspondence with the confessor of Louis XIV., the object of which was the reconversion of England. Besides appearing before the council, Oates made oath to the truth of his Narrative, which he published before Sir Edmundbury Godfrey, a zealous Protestant, and active justice of peace, and yet one that lived on good terms both with Non-conformists and Papists. Very shortly afterwards Godfrey was murdered. He was found in a ditch, with his own sword sticking in his body, which had not been plundered; and marks of strangling were thought to be visible about his neck, and some contusions on his breast. It has ever been a mystery by whom this crime was perpetrated; it was of course charged on the Papists, and retorted by them on the contrivers and assertors of the plot. But the support given to Oates's story by this event, conjointly with Coleman's papers, threw the whole country into a ferment. Vast crowds flocked to behold the corpse; the funeral excited equal interest, and the wish of its conductors to inflame the people is visible in some extraordinary precautions said to have been taken against a danger which no man could have apprehended seriously. The following account is taken from a contemporary of high tory principles, and animated by a most especial hatred of Oates.

* Evelyn's Memoirs.



This medal appears to have been struck in ridicule of the notion that Godfrey had murdered himself; he is represented as walking with the halter about his neck, apparently towards Primrose Hill, seen in the distance with its double head. The legend, "*Ergo pares sumus*,"—Therefore we are alike,—intimates that those, and those only, who can believe the well-known story of St. Denys, could believe the Papistical account that Godfrey had killed himself.

"The next and last act of this tragedy was the funeral of this poor gentleman; and if it had been possible the rout could have been more formidable than at the exposition of him, it must now have appeared. For as about other party concerns, so here the time and place of the assemblation was generally notified, as also what learned divine was to preach the sermon. The crowd was prodigious, both at the procession and in and about the church; and so heated, that any thing called Papist had gone to pieces in an instant. The Catholics all kept close in their houses and lodgings, thinking it a good composition to be safe there; so far were they from acting violently at that time. But there was all this time upheld among the common people an artificial fright, so as almost every one fancied a Popish knife just at his throat. And at the sermon, besides the preacher, two other thumping divines stood upright in the pulpit, one on each side of him, to guard him from being killed while

he was preaching, by the Papists. I did not see this spectacle, but was credibly told by some that affirmed they did see it; and though I have often mentioned it, as now, with precaution, yet I never met with any that contradicted it. A most portentous spectacle sure! Three parsons in one pulpit! Enough of itself, on a less occasion, to strike a terror into the audience.”*

This might perhaps be considered as party spleen: but the testimony of Calamy, one of the most learned and amiable dissenting clergymen of his day, and a believer in much, though not in all the details of the plot, to the extravagancies committed, is unexceptionable.

“Though I was at that time but young (he was about nine years of age), yet can I not forget how much I was affected with seeing several that were condemned for this plot, go to be executed at Tyburn, and at the pageantry of the mock processions on the 17th of November.† Roger L’Estrange (who used to be called Oliver’s Fiddler), formerly in danger of being hanged for a spy, and about this time the admired buffoon of high-church, called them ‘hobby-horsing processions.’

“In one of them, in the midst of vast crowds of spectators, who made great acclamations and showed abundance of satisfaction, there were carried in pageants upon men’s shoulders through the chief streets of the city, the effigies of the Pope, with the representation of the devil behind him, whispering in his ear, and wonderfully soothing and caressing him (though he afterwards deserted him, and left him to shift for himself, before he was committed to the flames), together with the likeness of the dead body of Sir Edmundbury Godfrey, carried before him by one that rode on horseback, designed to remind the people of his execrable murder. And a great number of dignitaries in their copes, with crosses; monks, friars, and Jesuits; Popish bishops in their mitres, with all their trinkets and appurtenances. Such things

* Roger North, *Examen*, p. 204.

† Queen Elizabeth’s birth-day. These processions were in 1679 and 1680.

as these very discernibly heightened and inflamed the general aversion of the nation from Popery ; but it is to be feared, on the other hand, they put some people, by way of revulsion, upon such desperate expedients as brought us even within an ace of ruin.”*

A few days after these events the parliament met. “ All Oates’s evidence was now so well believed, that it was not safe for any man to seem to doubt of any part of it. He thought he had the nation in his hands, and was swelled up to the highest pitch of vanity and insolence. And now he made a new edition of his discovery before the bar of the House of Commons.”† He now said that the Pope, having declared himself entitled to the possession of England, in virtue of the heresy of prince and people, had delegated the supreme power to the order of Jesuits, and that in consequence commissions had been issued by the general of that order, to various noblemen and gentlemen, investing them with all the great offices of the state. He swore that Coleman, and Sir George Wakeman, the Queen’s physician, were in the plot, and that for 15,000*l.* the latter had engaged to poison the King. Success emboldened him to soar still higher ; and after declaring to the House of Lords, that he had named all the persons of rank involved in the plot, he had the effrontery to accuse the Queen of being concerned in it, under circumstances the most improbable : besides that the charge was discountenanced by the whole tenour of her life.

“ It was plain, that postnate to the narrative of Oates, there was a design formed for cutting off the Queen by a false accusation, and thereupon this evidence was given, and Bedloe, another evidence for the plot, chimed in. It seems the not venturing so high in Oates’s narrative was thought to be an error to be retrieved by additional swearing. It was not a cabal of ordinary authority could

* Life of Edmund Calamy, vol. i. p. 84.

† Burnet, Hist. of his own Times, p. 430. Oates had before only deposed to a plot among the Jesuits to murder the king.

encourage Oates to come to the bar of the House of Commons, and say, 'Aye, Taitus Oates, accause Catherine Quean of England of haigh treason.' Upon which the King immediately confined him, and it might have been worse, if some people had not taken his part, who were considerable enough to give umbrage that it would be more prudent to set him at liberty again, which was done accordingly. The King was pleased to say, 'They think I have a mind to a new wife; but for all that I will not see an innocent woman abused.' This passage ought to be remembered to the honour of the King's justice: certainly if his Majesty had given way, the Queen had been very ill used.*

Oates's exaltation was a tempting bait, and other witnesses of infamous character began to appear. In November Coleman was tried, convicted, and executed on the joint evidence of Oates and Bedloe. There was sufficient disagreement between the statements made by the former upon the trial and before the council, to cause them to be received with much suspicion; but Chief Justice Scroggs, after manifesting throughout a most scandalous bias against the prisoner, charged the jury in a style of which this is a specimen: "The things the prisoner is accused of are of two sorts: the one is to subvert the Protestant religion, and to introduce Popery; the other was to destroy and kill the king. The evidence likewise was of two sorts; the one by letters of his own handwriting, and the other by witnesses *viva voce*. The former he seems to confess, the other totally to deny. . . You are to examine what these letters import in themselves, and what consequences are naturally to be deduced from them. That which is plainly intended is to bring in the Roman Catholic, and subvert the Protestant religion. That which is by consequence intended, is the killing the king, as being the most likely means to

* North's Examen, p. 186. Oates, in addition to his personal peculiarities, which are described in a passage presently to be quoted, was remarkable for a drawing way of speech, which is caricatured above, "I, Titus Oates," &c. -

introduce that which as it is apparent from his letters, was designed to be brought in.”* It would be a waste of words to point out the monstrous wickedness of this inference. The nature of the letters has been already described; that they contained schemes hostile to the constitution there is no doubt, though not, it should seem, such as bore out a charge of treason, least of all against the life of the king. And it is worthy of observation, that after dwelling at length upon the letters, Scroggs says not one word concerning the evidence of the witnesses. Justice Jones worthily seconded his principal: “You must find the prisoner guilty, or bring in two persons perjured.”

The next act of the tragedy was the trial of Ireland, Fenwick, and Whitebread, three Jesuits; and Grove and Pickering, two servants in the queen's chapel. Oates and Dugdale swore that the priests had conspired the death of the king, and at their instigation the latter had agreed to shoot him, which they attempted three several times; but that on one occasion the flint of their pistol was loose; on another there was no priming; and on the third no powder in the barrel: with other circumstances equally childish and improbable. Scroggs acknowledged that the case had broken down against Whitebread and Fenwick, and in defiance of all principles of justice, remanded them that further evidence might be procured.† The other three were condemned and executed. Whitebread, Fenwick, and three other Jesuits, afterwards underwent the same fate.

In July Wakeman and others were tried. “Scroggs summed up very favourably for the prisoners; far contrary to his former practice. The truth is, that this was looked upon as the Queen's trial, as well as Wakeman's. The prisoners were acquitted, and now the witnesses saw they were blasted; and they were enraged on it, which they vented with much spite against Scroggs.”‡

* Howell's State Trials, vol. vii. p. 56.

† State Trials, vol. vii. p. 120

‡ Burnet, p. 468.

" July 18, 1679. I went early to the Old Bailey sessions-house, to the famous trial of Sir G. Wakeman, one of the Queen's physicians, and three Benedictine monks: the first (who I take to be a worthy gentleman, abhorring such a fact) for intending to poison the King: the others as accomplices to carry on the plot to subvert the government and introduce Popery. The bench was crowded with the judges, the lord mayor, justices, and innumerable spectators. The chief accusers, Dr. Oates (as he called himself), and one Bedloe, a man of inferior note. Their testimonies were not so pregnant, and I fear, much of it upon hearsay; but swearing positively to some particulars which drew suspicion upon their truth, nor did circumstances so agree as to give either the bench or the jury so entire satisfaction as was expected. After therefore a long and tedious trial of nine hours, the jury brought them in not guilty, to the extraordinary triumph of the Papists, and* without sufficient disadvantage and reflections on the witnesses, especially Oates and Bedloe. This was a happy day for the lords in the Tower, who, expecting their trial, had this day gone against the prisoners at the bar, would all have been in the utmost hazard. For my part I look upon Oates as a vain insolent man, puffed up with the favour of the Commons for having discovered something really true, more especially as detecting the dangerous intrigue of Coleman, proved out of his own letters, and of a general design which the Jesuitical party of the Papists ever had, and still have, to ruin the church of England; but that he was trusted with those great secrets he pretended, or had any solid ground for what he accused divers noblemen of, I have many reasons to induce my contrary belief."

This, the first acquittal, was indeed equivalent to a sentence of perjury against the witnesses; whose credit began to be shaken by the contradictions in their evidence, discoverable by any who would calmly look for them;

* So in the original. The sense seems to require "not without."—Evelyn's Memoirs.

and by the constancy with which all the condemned met death, disclaiming to the last the justice of their sentence. Several trials followed with various success. Soon after the meeting of the Parliament in 1678, Lord Stafford, with four other Popish lords, had been committed to the Tower upon Oates's depositions. The parliament was dissolved in January, 1679. Another was called in March, and the question of the Popish lords proceeded in; but this also was dissolved in May, without the accused being brought to trial, and they remained in confinement till a third parliament was called in October, 1680, soon after which it was resolved, "That the House will proceed with the prosecution of the lords in the Tower, and forthwith begin with William, Viscount Stafford." Oates, Dugdale, and Turberville, two more witnesses of the same class, gave evidence upon which he was condemned. Stafford was an aged man, and of little estimation; yet he defended himself, prisoners not being then allowed benefit of counsel, with dignity and constancy, through a long trial of six days. He urged with much force the infamy of Oates.

"Dec. 6, 1680. One thing my lord said, as to Oates, which I confess did exceedingly affect me; that a person who during his depositions should so vauntingly brag, that though he went over to the church of Rome, yet he never was a Papist, nor of their religion, all the time that he seemed to apostatize from the Protestant, but only as a spy; though he confessed he took their sacraments, worshipped their images, went through all their oaths, and discipline of their proselytes, swearing secrecy and to be faithful, but with intent to come over again and betray them; that such a hypocrite, that had so deeply prevaricated as even to turn idolater (for so we of the church of England term it), attesting God so solemnly that he was entirely theirs, and devoted to their interests, and consequently (as he pretended) trusted; I say that the witness of such a profligate wretch should be admitted against the life of a peer, this my lord looked upon as a monstrous thing, and such as must needs redound to the dishonour of our religion and nation. And

verily I am of his lordship's opinion : such a man's testimony should not be taken against the life of a dog. But the merit of something material which he discovered against Coleman, put him in such esteem with the parliament, that now I fancy he stuck at nothing, and thought every body was to take what he said for gospel. The consideration of this in some other circumstances began to stagger me : particularly how it was possible that one who went among the Papists on such a design, and pretended to be intrusted with so many letters and commissions from the Pope and the party, nay and delivered them to so many great persons, should not reserve one of them to show, nor so much as one copy of any commission, which he who had such dexterity in opening letters might certainly have done, to the undeniable conviction of those that he accused : but as I said he gained credit on Coleman ; but as to others whom he so madly flew upon, I am little inclined to believe his testimony, he being so slight a person, so passionate, ill-bred, and of such impudent behaviour ; nor is it likely that such piercing politicians as the Jesuits should trust him with so high and so dangerous secrets.*

Burnet gives his own words : " I asked him, what were the arguments which prevailed on him to change his religion, and go over to the church of Rome. He upon that stood up, and laid his hands on his breast and said, ' God and his holy angels knew that he had never changed, but that he had gone among them on purpose to betray them.' This gave me such a character of him, that I could have no regard to anything he either said or swore after that."†

Stafford died with dignity and calmness, such as to make a deep impression on the spectators. Their behaviour was decent, and even compassionate, and a general belief in his dying protestations of innocence was expressed. He was the last victim, strictly speaking, of this impudent and atrocious forgery, upon which fourteen

* Evelyn's Memoirs.

† Hist. of his own Times, p. 428.

other men had been previously executed. Many Romish priests also were condemned, and, in part at least, suffered death upon a statute of Elizabeth, making it treason for such to be found within the realm.

It is not from any resemblance in the circumstances of the times, nor from similarity of character, though indeed that is considerable, that Cleon and Oates have been grouped together, so much as to show that cruelty and credulity are equally the growth of ancient and modern times, and that there have always been periods when it has been easy for men, contemptible in rank, talent, and character, so they be possessed of a certain low cunning and a plenitude of impudence, to govern the public mind by availing themselves of its prejudices. Diminish these prejudices in the smallest degree, in the same degree is the liability to this degrading and mischievous bondage reduced. A startling warning may be drawn from the comparison of the two periods. Had England resembled in circumstances, and form of government, the tyrant-democracy of Athens, there is strong reason to think that the fearful enormities committed by that profligate city against her dependents might have been equalled in the extirmination of the obnoxious sect; as we know that the accusation of non-conformity, and the charge of conspiring to establish a tyranny,* formed equally ready handles of insult and

* The readiness of the Athenians to listen to unfounded and malicious accusations has been noticed in the Knights, and is a favourite subject of ridicule and reproach throughout Aristophanes. The following passage of the Wasps is worth notice :—

Be the fault great or small, this cuckoo song
Of tyranny rings ever in our ears;
These fifty years it slept, but now the cry
Is bandied even at Billingsgate, as stale
As mackerel in July. Suppose a turbot
Should suit your palate, straight the sprat-seller
Next stall exclaims, "Why, this is tyranny!
No tastes aristocratical in Athens!"

oppression. Happily the balanced and complicated form of the constitution, and the impossibility of moving with one accord a great nation, delivered our ancestors from this extremity of guilt. May the hazard which they incurred serve as a beacon, to warn men against suffering themselves to be hoodwinked and goaded by their fears into forgetfulness alike of reason and charity.

It may be some consolation to any whose patriotism is shocked by the ready belief of Oates's narrative, to know that the proverbial credulity of the English was fully equalled by the gullibility of the acute and polished Athenians.* Gross as was the imposture, it was yet not without some foundation in truth; and in the then

Or if you buy anchovies, and demand,
 Gratis, a leek for sauce, some herb-woman,
 Squinting, growls out, "So you 're for tyranny,
 Dost think the state will furnish you with garnish?"

Ver. 488.

* See Aristophanes, every where, more particularly in the Knights. Demus demands from Cleon his ring of office:—

Why, how now, rogue?

This is no ring of mine—it tallies not

With my device, or much my eyes deceive me.

Saus. Allow me, sir,—what might be your impression?

Dem. A roasted thrium¹, with thick fat enclosed.

Saus. (*looking at the ring*) I see no thrium.

Dem. What the impression, then?

Saus. A wide-mouthed gull, seated upon a rock,

In act to make a speech.

Mitchell, p. 245. See also ver. 1260. (Ed. Bekk).

¹ In case the reader should have any curiosity about Athenian cookery, the following is the recipe for a thrium. Take a certain quantity of rice, fine flour or grain, boil it till enough done, then pour off the water, and mix it with soft cheese and a few eggs: roll the mixture in fig-leaves, tie it in a cloth, and stew it for some time in gravy. Then remove the cloth, pour over it a plate of fresh boiling honey, and let it stew till it becomes yellow, observing to turn it continually. Serve it up with the honey poured over it. Another recipe gives brains and cheese, mixed up with a rich and highly-esteemed fish-pickle, as the ingredients.

alarming crisis of public affairs, we may imagine how it was that eager politicians greedily swallowed a story adapted to their prepossessions, although candid and dispassionate observers, like Evelyn, saw immediately how little of it was entitled to credit. Yet even Evelyn was partly a believer, as also Dryden, whose party prejudices certainly did not lead him to side with the whigs.

That plot, the nation's curse,
 Bad in itself, but represented worse ;
 Raised in extremes, and in extremes decried ;
 With oaths affirmed, with dying vows denied ;
 Not weighed and winnowed by the multitude,
 But swallowed in the mass, unchewed and crude.
 Some truth there was, but dashed and brewed with lies
 To please the fools and puzzle all the wise.
 Succeeding times did equal folly call,
 Believing nothing, or believing all.

Absalom and Achitophel, part I.

The following passages will probably amuse the reader, and convey a good idea of the character of Oates himself :—

“ Titus Oates was the son of an anabaptist teacher, who afterwards conformed and got into orders, and took a benefice as this his son did. He was proud and ill-natured, haughty but ignorant. He had been complained of for some very indecent expressions concerning the mysteries of the Christian religion. He was once presented for perjury. But he got to be chaplain in one of the king's ships, from which he was dismissed upon charges of gross profligacy. . . . He seemed inclined to be instructed in the Popish religion. One Hutchinson, a Jesuit, had that work put upon him. . . . He told me that Oates and the Jesuits were always on ill terms. They did not allow Oates above nine-pence a day, of which he complained much ; and Hutchinson relieved him often. They wished they could be well rid of him, and sent him beyond sea, being in very ill terms with him. This made Hutchinson conclude that they had not at that time trusted Oates with

their secrets; Oates was kept for some time at St. Omers, and was thence sent through France into Spain, and was now returned to England. He had been long acquainted with Tongue, and made his first discovery to him.”*

“Oates was a low man, of an ill cut, very short neck, and his visage and features were most particular. His mouth was the centre of his face, and a compass there would sweep his nose, forehead, and chin within the perimeter. In a word, he was a most consummate cheat, blasphemer, vicious, perjured, impudent, and saucy foul-mouthed wretch; and were it not for the truth of history and the great emotions in the public which he was the cause of, not fit (so little deserving) to be remembered.”†

“Oates would never say all that he knew, for that was not consistent with the uncertainty of events. For he could not foresee what sort of evidence there might be occasion for, nor whom (it might be thought fit) to accuse. All which matters were kept in reserve to be launched or not, as occasion, like fair weather, invited, or flaws discouraged. And having once said, there was all he knew (if he had been so overseen), it had ended the plot, and then there could have been no further suspense or expectation, as was afterwards continually kept on foot, in hopes that at length the bottom of the plot would come up. In the mean time the faction could calumniate any person, as the Duke, the Queen, and even the good King himself, as being in the plot, much more any one that was loyal in the ministry and magistracy, and so keep all in one. And all the while it went about in whispers, that strange things would appear, if they could but once come to the bottom of the plot, and each one’s evil imagination was to inform what that was, as will fully appear afterwards. When Oates was examined in the House of Commons, and was asked if he knew of any further designs against his Majesty, &c.,

* Burnet, p. 424-5.

† North, *Examen*, p. 225.

instead of answering that question, he told a tale of a fox and a goose, that the fox, to see if the ice would bear him and his goose, first carried over a stone as heavy as the goose. And neither then nor ever after, during his whole life, would he be brought to say he had told all that he knew.”*

“Oates was now (the author is speaking of a time soon after his first examination before parliament) in his trine exaltation; his plot in full force, efficacy, and virtue: he walked about with his guards (assigned) for fear of the Papists murdering him. He had lodgings in Whitehall, and 1200*l.* per annum pension. And no wonder, after he had the impudence to cry to the House of Lords in plain terms, that if they would not help him he must help himself. He put on an episcopal garb (except his lawn sleeves), silk gown and cassock, great hat, satin hatband and rose, and was called, or most blasphemously called himself, ‘the Saviour of the nation.’ Whoever he pointed at was taken up and committed, so that many people got out of his way, as from a blast, and glad that they could prove their last two years’ conversation. The very breath of him was pestilential, and if it brought not imprisonment or death over such on whom it fell, it surely poisoned reputation, and left good Protestants arrant Papists; and, something worse than that, in danger of being put in the plot as traitors.”†

“He threatened me indeed with a parliament, but that is a course of speech he has got. If the prisoners but ask a new comer for his garnish, the master of the prison shall be told of a parliament. A bishop shall not suspend a minister for refusing to officiate according to the canon, but he is presently threatened with a parliament. If the university shall not think fit to allow Mr. Oates his degree, the lawn sleeves are to be ruffled next parliament. I was walking awhile since only over the outer court at Whitehall innocently about my business, and because I did not cap him over the square, as the boys do fellows at Cambridge, ‘Squire L’Estrange,’

* North, Examen. p. 176.

† Ib. p. 204.

says he, 'we shall have a parliament,' twirling his hat about between his finger and thumb, with a look and action not to be expressed."*

The credit of the plot and of its author declined together. In 1681, Oates appeared as a witness in defence of one Colledge, better known as the "Protestant joiner," a busy man and a zealot against Popery, who was accused of treason upon no better grounds than had served his own party for the destruction of so many Papists. The court was eager for revenge, and by no means scrupulous concerning the means of obtaining it; the witnesses, who had supported the plot, were indifferent which way they perjured themselves, so long as perjury was profitable, and swore against Colledge as readily as against the Jesuits. Oates, therefore, who adhered to his old friends, be this one thing recorded to his credit, was brought into collision with his former associates, and a scene of abuse passed between him and them in open court which is too long for quotation, but will satisfy any person of the infamy of at least one, probably of both parties. (State Trials, vol. viii. p. 628.) Towards the end of Charles's reign, when the discontinuance of parliaments threw all power into the hands of the court, and the infamous Jefferies was a ready minister of oppression; Oates was prosecuted by the Duke of York for libel, and damages assessed at 100,000*l*. This was but the beginning of his misfortunes. In 1688, soon after the accession of James, he was convicted of perjury upon two indictments: the one charging him with having sworn that he was at a consultation of Jesuits in London, when he was really at St. Omers; the other, with having deposed to Ireland's presence in London at a time when he was gone into Staffordshire. The sentence passed upon him was most savage and illegal, and moreover executed with such severity as to produce the belief that he was not meant to survive it. It is in itself a curiosity, and as such, as well as for the instruction of any who do not duly appreciate the bless-

* L'Estrange, Dialogue between Zekiel and Ephraim.

ings of an incorrupt judicature : though long, it shall be given entire.

Justice Wilkins. " I hope I have not been thought a man of ill-nature, and I confess nothing has been so great a regret to me in my place and station as to give judgment and pronounce the sentence of law against my fellow-subjects, my fellow-creatures—but as to you, Mr. Oates, I cannot say my fellow-christian. Yet in this case when I consider your offence, and the dismal effects that have followed upon it, I cannot say I have any remorse in giving judgment upon you. And therefore having told you my thoughts shortly about your crime, and how readily I pronounce your sentence, I shall now declare the judgment of the court upon you : and it is this :—

" First, the court does order for a fine, that you pay 1000 marks upon each indictment.

" Secondly, that you be stripped of all your canonical habits.

" Thirdly, the court doth award, that you do stand upon the pillory, and in the pillory here before Westminster Hall gate, upon Monday next, for an hour's time, between the hours of ten and twelve, with a paper over your head (which you must first walk with round about to all the courts in Westminster Hall) declaring your crime. And that is upon the first indictment.

" Fourthly (on the second indictment), upon Tuesday you shall stand upon and in the pillory at the Royal Exchange, in London, for the space of an hour, between the hours of twelve and two, with the same inscription.

" You shall upon the next Wednesday be whipped from Aldgate to Newgate.

" Upon Friday you shall be whipped from Newgate to Tyburn by the hands of the common hangman.

" But Mr. Oates, we cannot but remember there were several particular times you swore false about, and therefore, as annual commemorations, that it may be known to all people as long as you live, we have taken special care of you for an annual punishment.

" Upon the 24th of April, every year, as long as you

live, you are to stand upon the pillory, and in the pillory at Tyburn, just opposite to the gallows, for the space of an hour, between the hours of ten and twelve.

"You are to stand upon and in the pillory here, at Westminster Hall gate, every 9th of August, in every year, so long as you live. And that it may be known what we mean by it, it is to remember what he swore about Mr. Ireland's being in town between the 8th and 12th of August.

"You are to stand upon and in the pillory at Charing Cross, upon the 10th of August, every year during your life, for an hour, between ten and twelve.

"The like over against the Temple gate upon the 11th.

"And upon the 2nd of September (which is another notorious time, which you cannot but be remembered of) you are to stand upon and in the pillory, for the space of one hour, between twelve and two, at the Royal Exchange; all this you are to do every year during your life, and to be committed close prisoner as long as you live.

"This I pronounce to be the judgment of the court upon you for your offences. And I must tell you plainly that if it had been in my power to have carried it further, I should not have been unwilling to have given sentence of death upon you, for I am sure you deserve it."*

Burnet says, "But now the sitting of the parliament of England came on. And as a preparative to it, Oates was convicted of perjury upon the evidence of the witnesses from St. Omers, who had been brought over before to discredit his testimony. Now juries were so prepared as to believe more easily than formerly. So he was condemned to have his priestly habit taken from him, to be a prisoner for life, to be set in the pillory in all the public places through the city, and ever after that set in the pillory four times a-year, and to be whipped by the common hangman from Aldgate to

* State Trials, vol. x. p. 1316.

Newgate one day, and the next from Newgate to Tyburn, which was executed with so much rigour that his back appeared to be all over flead. This was thought too little if he were guilty, and too much if he were innocent; and was illegal in all the parts of it. For as the secular court could not order the ecclesiastical habit to be taken from him, so to condemn a man to perpetual imprisonment was not in the power of the court. And the extreme rigour of such whipping was without a precedent. Yet he, who was an original in all things, bore this with a constancy that amazed all those who saw it. So that this treatment did rather raise his reputation than sink it."*

So soon as the heat of the plot was over, Charles reduced his pension one-half, and ultimately deprived him of it altogether. After the Revolution he was pardoned, "reintegrated at court, and admitted to a pension of 400*l.* per annum, at which he was very wroth, for Charles gave him 600*l.*, 'and sure,' he said, 'William will give me more.' He sought by Act of Parliament to have his judgment for perjury reversed, but he could never obtain a swearing capacity again. The Earl of Danby (then Leeds) knew the danger of that, and would indeed have his sentence reversed, that is, having been whipped from Newgate to Tyburn, would fain have had him whipped back from Tyburn to Newgate. The power of swearing is formidable to great and small, and his lordship was within an ace of being put in the plot for Godfrey's murder."† Here ends his public life; he died in 1705, having once more changed his religion, and entered into the communion of the Baptists. To the last many persons adhered to him, and considered him a martyr to the Protestant cause. In conclusion, we subjoin his character, as drawn by

* Hist. of his own Times, p. 627. In Narcissus Luttrell's MS. Brief Narration, &c., it is said, under date August 11, 1688, "Titus Oates stood in the pillory at Charing Cross, according to annual custom." State Trials, vol. x. p. 1317.

† North, Examen, p. 225

Calamy, whose temper and opinions alike free his testimony from suspicion.

"Dr. Oates was a man of invincible courage and resolution, and endured what would have killed a great many others. He occasioned a strange turn in the nation, after a general lethargy, that had been of some years' continuance. By awakening us out of sleep he was an instrument in the hand of God for our preservation. Yet after all, he was but a sorry foul-mouthed wretch, as I can testify from what I once heard from him in company.

"I have been informed at Westminster that Dr. Oates was a frequent auditor of my predecessor, Mr. Alsop, and moved for leave to come to the Lord's table with his society, but that an honest man of the congregation upon that occasion spoke freely against him, as one so irregular in his life as to be very unfit for church communion. The doctor afterwards meeting Mr. Alsop, told him that man had sadly abused him, and upon that account he vehemently complained as one that was injuriously dealt with. Mr. Alsop cried out, 'Prove him a liar, doctor! prove him a liar!' which it would have been well for him if he could have done. But he really bore an indifferent character at Westminster, and notwithstanding all the service he had done, there were so many things concurring to lessen his credit, as makes it very hard to distinguish between what was true and what was false in his depositions. For which reason I must own that I am the less surprised, that the parliament after the Revolution should leave him under a



Medal of Oates. The reverse represents the pretended scheme to shoot Charles II. walking in St. James's Park. Legend: The Popish Plott discovered by mee, T. Oates, D.D.

brand, and incapacitate him for being a witness for the future.”*

We may conclude the chapter with a short reference to that most remarkable transaction, the mutilation of the Hermæ, which occurred B.C. 415, just before the Sicilian expedition, and in its consequences bears a striking analogy to the passage in history which we have just related. The Hermæ were square pillars, surmounted by a head of the god, Hermes, or Mercury, which, in compliance with an ancient custom, were placed at the entrances of temples and houses. Most of these throughout Athens were defaced in the course of one night. A great sensation was excited in the city; for the circumstance was held to be of evil omen to the important enterprise just about to be commenced, and moreover to indicate the existence of a plot to overthrow the democracy. Alcibiades was accused among others, but no evidence could be obtained to bring home the offence to any one: the excitement passed off for a time, and he was ordered with the army to Sicily. But men's minds were unsettled, and agitated by terrors of they knew not what, aggravated by designing persons for party ends. “From the affair of the Mercuries, a plot was inferred for the establishment of oligarchy or tyranny, and the irritation was cherished by continual discourses of what Athens had suffered through the Pisistratidæ. On the slightest suspicion, on the most discreditable evidence, men, the most respected, were imprisoned; alarm increased with the number of accusations, and each found readier credit than the last. At length Andocides, one of the imprisoned, seeing no other hope of escape, and hoping by the sacrifice of a few to save the rest, and to tranquillize the city, confessed the crime, and accused some others, whether truly or falsely is not known. The people received the information with joy; and setting free the informer, and those whom he had cleared, tried and executed the others. The proof was very inadequate, and the condemnation most unjust; but the panic was in great measure abated.”†

* Life of Calamy, p. 120.

† Greece, p. 74.

In this jealous temper, Alcibiades, though not included in the accusation, was summoned home from Sicily. He fled to Sparta, and by his powerful talents contributed very principally to produce those reverses which subsequently overtook the Athenians. The account of this remarkable transaction is given in Thucydides, vi. c. 27, 60, and most completely in the speech of Andocides de Mysteriis, which is contained in Bekker's collection of the Greek orators.

CHAPTER XVI.

Athenian expedition against Sicily—Siege of Syracuse—Retreat and destruction of the army—Retreat of Ney in Russia—Retreat of Sir John Hawkwood in Italy.

WE now come to the Sicilian expedition, and request the reader's patience if we dwell longer than usual on the closing scene of an undertaking, described by its historian as "the greatest that happened in this war, or at all, that we have heard of, among the Grecians, being to the victors most glorious, and most calamitous to the vanquished."* The total destruction of the army of Athens struck a deadly blow at her greatness, though she struggled most energetically to retrieve her loss, and, through the want of able leaders at Sparta, nearly succeeded. But the scale was turned against her, and from this time forwards she fought an uphill battle.

In the seventeenth year of the war, B.C. 415, the Athenians, at the suggestion of Alcibiades, resolved to send a very powerful armament to Sicily, nominally to protect the little republic of Egesta against Selinus and Syracuse, but really to re-establish the Ionian interest in the island. We may observe that Sicily was colonized partly by Ionian, partly by Dorian Greeks, and that the former naturally favoured the Athenians, the latter the Lacedæmonians, as the heads of their respective races. At present the Dorian race, at the head of which stood Syracuse, was by far the more powerful: and alarm was felt, or at least pretended, that unless checked by a powerful diversion at home, they might get all Sicily into their hands, and then unite with their Peloponnesian

* Thucyd. vii. 87.

kinsmen to pull down that object of universal jealousy, the Athenian empire. Moved therefore by the entreaties of the Egestans, by these political arguments, and most of all by the desire of conquest, the Athenians "resolved to go again to Sicily, and if they could, wholly to subdue it, being for the most part ignorant both of the greatness of the island and of the multitude of people, as well Greeks as Barbarians, that inhabited the same, and that they undertook a war, not much less than the war against the Peloponnesians."*

Nicias, of whose cautious and unenterprising temper we have before spoken, saw and remonstrated against the impolicy of hazarding the flower of the state in a distant and dangerous warfare, while many of its revolted subjects remained unsubdued: but his warning was unheeded, and he was required, in conjunction with Alcibiades and Lamachus, to assume the command of this expedition, which he so entirely disapproved. Nicias, a man of courage in the field, was too timid to struggle against the popular will: he submitted, but still endeavoured to damp the eagerness of his countrymen, by exaggerating the force requisite to ensure success. A hundred triremes, he said, with 5000 heavy armed infantry, and archers and slingers in proportion, were the least they could send. Here he rather overshot himself; the force demanded was immediately voted, and no further pretext for dissuasion or denial remained. The armament, including the crews of the triremes, is estimated by Mitford to have contained at least 30,000 men.

Never was an enterprise undertaken with better will. Those who were engaged in it vied with each other in the splendour of their armour and equipment, and far from finding any difficulty to complete the levy, the whole of the citizens would willingly have gone in a body; "the old men, upon hope to subdue the place they went to, or that at least so great a power could not miscarry; and the young men, upon desire to see a foreign country, and to gaze, making little doubt but to

* Thucyd. vi. 1.

return with safety. As for the common sort, and the soldiers, they made account to gain by it not only their wages for the time, but also so to amplify the state in power as that their stipend should endure for ever. So that, through the vehement desire thereunto of the most, they also that liked it not, for fear, if they held up their hands against it, to be thought evil affected to the state, were content to let it pass.”*

“The summer being now half spent, they put to sea for Sicily. The Athenians themselves, and as many of their confederates as were at Athens upon the day appointed, betimes in the morning came down into Peiræus, and went aboard to take sea. With them came down in a manner the whole multitude of the city, as well inhabitants as strangers: the inhabitants, to follow after such as belonged unto them, some their friends, some their kinsmen, and some their children: filled both with hope and lamentations; hope of conquering what they went for, and lamentation as being in doubt whether ever they should see each other any more, considering what a way they were to go from their own territory.

“And now when they were to leave one another to danger, they apprehended the greatness of the same more than they had done before, when they decreed the expedition. Nevertheless their present strength, by the abundance of every thing before their eyes prepared for the journey, gave them heart again in beholding it. But the strangers and other multitude came only to see the show, as of a worthy and incredible design. For this preparation, being the first Grecian power that ever went out of Greece from one only city, was the most sumptuous and the most glorious of all that ever had been set forth before it, to that day.

“For the shipping, it was elaborate with a great deal of cost, both of the captains† of galleys, and of the

* Thucyd. vi. 24.

† *τριήπαριάρχαι*. The heavy expense of equipping ships of war was thrown chiefly upon individuals of wealth. Sometimes, as here, the state provided ships, and the trierarch

city. For the state allowed a drachma * a day to every mariner, and gave of unequipped galleys sixty swift ships of war and forty transports for the conveyance of soldiers. And the captains of galleys both put into them the most able servants,† and besides the wages of the state, unto the [uppermost bank of oars, called the] *Thranitæ*,‡ and to the servants,† gave somewhat of their own; and bestowed great cost otherwise every one upon his own galley, both in the badges § and other rigging, each one striving to the utmost to have his galley, both in some ornament, and also in swiftness, to exceed the rest.

“And for the land forces, they were levied with exceeding great choice, and every man endeavoured to excel his fellow in the bravery of his arms and utensils that belonged to his person. Insomuch as amongst themselves it begat quarrel about whose office should be the most bravely filled, but amongst other Grecians a conceit that it was an ostentation rather of their power and riches, than a preparation against an enemy. For if a man enter into account of the expense, as well of the public as of private men that went the voyage; namely, of the public, what was spent already in the business, and what was to be given to the commanders to carry with them; and of private men, what every one had be-

only the equipment; at others the trierarch was obliged to build the vessels. The subject is too intricate to be treated in a note; the curious reader will find it fully handled in Wolff's *Prolegomena* to the *Oration* against *Leptines*. See also a short notice in Dr. Arnold's note, vi. 31.

* About nine-pence halfpenny.

† *ὑπηρέτας*. Petty officers, as the pilot, boatswain, &c. See Arnold's notes on the passage.

‡ *Θαυλίται*. There being three banks of oars one above another, the uppermost were called *Thranitæ*, the middlemost *Zeugitæ*, and the lowest *Thalamitæ*, whereof the *thranitæ* managed the longest oar, and therefore in respect of their greater labour might deserve a greater pay.

§ *Σημεῖα*. The images which being set on the fore-part of the galley did give it the name for the most part.

stowed and had still to bestow upon his person, and every captain on his galley; and beside what every one was likely, over and above his allowance from the state, to expend on provision for so long a warfare; and what men carried with them on trading speculations, both soldiers and merchants, he will find the whole sum carried out of the city to amount to a great many talents. And the armament was no less noised for the strange boldness of the attempt, and gloriousness of the show, than for its superiority over those against whom it was to go, for the length of the voyage, and for that it was undertaken with so vast future hopes, in respect of their present power.

“After they were all aboard, and all things laid in that they meant to carry with them, silence was commanded by the trumpet; and after the wine had been carried about to the whole army, and all, as well the generals as the soldiers, had poured libations out of gold and silver cups, they made their prayers, such as by the law were appointed for before their taking sea; not in every galley apart, but all together, the herald pronouncing them: and the company from the shore, both of the city and whosoever else wished them well, prayed with them. And when they had sung the Pæan, and ended the health, they put forth to sea.”*

For the actions and fortunes of the expedition, we must refer the reader to the History of Greece, contenting ourselves with such a mere outline as may render the termination of it, with which alone we are concerned, intelligible. Alcibiades was recalled almost immediately, in consequence of the jealousy excited by the mutilation of the Hermæ; Lamachus was killed in battle, and thus Nicias was left in the sole charge of an enterprise of which he disapproved and despaired. The first campaign was wasted in inactivity. In the second, siege was laid to Syracuse, a city of large extent and great natural strength; and all promised fairly for success until Gylippus, a Spartan of the royal blood, arrived with 700

* Thucyd. vi. 30. 32.

Lacedæmonians, broke through the besiegers' lines, and threw himself into the city. This reinforcement, and the skill and enterprise of the Spartan general, turned the fortune of the siege, which from thenceforth is a series of disasters. In the following winter, Nicias, weary of his command and broken in health, sent home to represent the unpromising situation of affairs, and to request leave to resign; but he received in answer an injunction to remain, with the assurance that powerful succours should be sent out. Accordingly, early in the spring, Demosthenes, the victor at Pylos, was despatched with a strong reinforcement, consisting of seventy-three triremes and about 5000 heavy-armed infantry. That able general made one powerful attempt to change the fortune of the siege, and on its failure recommended an immediate retreat. But Nicias, who was brave enough in the field, but very deficient in moral courage, dared not to return unauthorized by the people. He retained his station, therefore, though hopeless of success, except from the exertions of some malcontent Syracusans with whom he maintained correspondence. Meanwhile the army was wasting under sickness, arising from the low and marshy ground on which it was encamped: and the Syracusans eagerly prosecuted their success, and at last cut off from the besiegers the possibility of retreating by sea, by utterly defeating the Athenian fleet. To act any longer on the offensive was out of the question; the only hope of safety was instantly to break up the siege and march into the interior, where the army, yet powerful, might find among the friendly Sicels, a native race who still occupied the interior of the island, a safe and plentiful retreat until assistance could be sent them, or further measures concerted.

"It was a lamentable departure, not only for one point of their condition, that they marched away with the loss of their whole fleet, and that instead of their great hopes, they had endangered both themselves and the state, but also for the dolorous objects which were presented both to the eye and mind of every of them in particular in the leaving of their camp. For the dead

lying unburied, when any one saw his friend on the ground, it struck him at once both with fear and grief. But the living that were sick or wounded, both grieved them more than the dead, and were more miserable. For with entreaties and lamentations they put them to a stand, pleading to be taken along by whomsoever they saw of their followers or familiars, and hanging on the necks of their comrades, and following as far as they were able. And if the strength of any person failed him, it was not with few entreaties or little lamentation that he was there left. Insomuch as the whole army, filled with tears, and irresolute, could hardly get away, though the place were hostile, and they had suffered already, and feared to suffer in the future more than with tears could be expressed, but hung down their heads and generally blamed themselves. For they seemed nothing else but even the people of some great city expunged by siege, and making their escape. For the whole number that marched were no less one with another than 40,000 men. Of which not only the ordinary sort carried every one what he thought he should have occasion to use, but also the heavy infantry and horsemen, contrary to their custom, carried their victuals under their arms, partly for want, and partly for distrust of their servants,* who from time to time ran over to the enemy; but at this time went the greatest number: and yet what they carried was not enough to serve the turn. For not a jot more provision was left remaining in the camp. Moreover the sufferings of others, and that equal division of misery, which is some alleviation in that we suffer with many, were not now thought to contain even thus much of relief. And the rather, because they considered from what splendour and glory which they enjoyed before, into how low an estate they were

* Grecian citizens on service were always attended by slaves, as we have often had occasion to observe, who served as light infantry. The Athenians, however, also employed regular light-armed mercenaries, archers, and slingers from Crete and elsewhere.

now fallen : for never had so great a reverse befallen a Grecian army. For whereas they came with purpose to enslave others, they departed in greater fear of being made slaves themselves ; and instead of prayers and hymns of victory, with which they put to sea, they abandoned their undertaking with sounds of very different signification ; and whereas they came out seamen, they departed landmen, and relied not upon their naval forces, but upon their men of arms. Nevertheless, in respect of the great danger yet hanging over them, these present miseries seemed all but tolerable.

“ Nicias perceiving the army to be dejected, and the great change that was in it, came up to the ranks, and encouraged and comforted them, as far as for the present means he was able. And as he went from part to part, he exalted his voice more and more, both as being earnest in his exhortation, and because also he desired that the benefit of his words might reach as far might be.

“ Athenians and confederates, we must hope still even in our present estate. Men have been saved ere now from greater dangers than these are. Nor ought you too much to accuse yourselves, either for your losses past, or the undeserved miseries we are now in. Even I myself that have the advantage of none of you in strength of body (for you see under what sickness I now labour), nor am thought inferior to any of you for prosperity past, either in respect of my own private person or otherwise, am nevertheless now in as much danger as the meanest of you. And yet I have worshipped the gods frequently, according to the law, and lived justly and unblamably towards men. For which cause, my hope is still confident of the future ; though these calamities, as being not according to the measure of our desert, do indeed make me fear. But they may perhaps cease. For both the enemies have already had sufficient fortune, and the gods, if any of them have been displeased with our voyage, have already sufficiently punished us. Others have invaded their neighbours as well as we ; and as their offence, which proceeded of human infirmity, so their punishment also hath been tolerable. And we

have reason now both to hope for more favour from the gods (for our case deserveth their pity rather than their hatred), and also not to despair of ourselves, seeing how good and how many men of arms you are, marching together in order of battle. Make account of this, that wheresoever you please to sit down, there presently of yourselves you are a city, such as not any other city in Sicily can easily sustain if you assault, or remove if you be once seated. Now for your march, that it may be safe and orderly, look to it yourselves, making no other account any of you, but what place soever he shall be forced to fight in, the same if he win it will be his country and his walls. March you must with diligence, both night and day alike, for our victual is short; and if we can but reach some amicable territory of the Siculi (for these are still firm to us for fear of the Syracusans), then you may think yourselves secure. And notice has been sent to them with directions to meet us, and to bring us forth some supplies of victual. In sum, soldiers, let me tell you, it is necessary that you be valiant; for there is no place near where, being cowards, you can possibly be saved. Whereas, if you escape through the enemies at this time, you may every one see again whatsoever anywhere he most desires, and the Athenians may re-erect the great power of their city, how low soever fallen. For the men, not the walls nor the empty galleys, are the city.'

"Nicias, as he used this hortative, went withal about the army, and restored order wherever he saw it straggling, or the ranks broken. Demosthenes having spoken to the same or like purpose, did as much to those soldiers under him; and they marched forward, those with Nicias in a square battalion, and then those with Demosthenes in the rear. And the men of arms received those that carried the baggage, and the other multitude, within them. And when they were come to the ford of the river Anapus, they there found certain of the Syracusans and their confederates embattled against them on the bank, but these they put to flight, and having won the passage, marched forward. But the Syracusan horsemen pressed

still upon them, and their light-armed plied them with their darts in the flank. This day they marched forty furlongs, and lodged that night at the foot of a certain hill. The next day, as soon as it was light, they marched forwards, about twenty furlongs, and descending into a certain champagne ground, encamped there with intent both to get victual at the houses (for the place was inhabited), and to carry water with them thence; for before them, in the way they were to pass for many furlongs together, there was little to be had. But the Syracusans in the mean time got before them, and cut off their passage with a wall. This was at a steep hill, on either side whereof was the channel of a torrent with steep and rocky banks, and it is called *Acraeum Lepas*.^{*} The next day the Athenians went on. And the horsemen and darters of the Syracusans and their confederates, being a great number of both, pressed them so with their horses and darts, that the Athenians after long fight, were compelled to retire again into the same camp; but now with less victual than before, because the horsemen would suffer them no more to straggle abroad.

“In the morning betimes they dislodged, and put themselves on their march again, and forced their way to the hill which the enemy had fortified, where they found before them the Syracusan foot embattled in great depth above the fortification, for the place itself was but narrow. The Athenians coming up, assaulted the wall, but the shot of the enemy, who were many, and the steepness of the hill (for they could easily cast home from above), making them unable to take it, they retired again and rested. There happened withal some claps of thunder and a shower of rain, as usually falleth out at this time of the year, being now near autumn, which further disheartened the Athenians, who thought that also this did tend to their destruction. Whilst they lay still, Gylippus and the Syracusans sent part of their army to raise a wall at their backs in the way they had come, but this the Athenians hindered by sending against them part of theirs. After this the Athenians retiring with their

^{*} The rock of the citadel. So in Cumberland and Westmoreland there a score of Castle Crag.

whole army into a more champagne ground, lodged there that night, and the next day went forward again. And the Syracusans, with their darts from every part round about, wounded many of them ; and when the Athenians charged they retired, and when they retired the Syracusans charged ; and that especially upon the hindmost, that by putting to flight a few, they might terrify the whole army. And for a good while the Athenians in this manner withstood them ; and afterwards being gotten five or six furlongs forward, they rested in the plain ; and the Syracusans went from them to their own camp.

“This night it was concluded by Nicias and Demosthenes, seeing the miserable estate of their army, and the want already of all necessaries, and that many of their men in many assaults of the enemy were wounded, to leave as many fires lighted as they could, and lead away the army, —not the road they purposed before, but toward the sea, which was the contrary way to that which the Syracusans guarded. Now this whole journey of the army lay not towards Catana, but towards the other side of Sicily, Camarina and Gela, and the cities, as well Grecian as Barbarian, that way. When they had made many fires accordingly, they marched in the night, and (as usually it falleth out in all armies, and most of all in the greatest, to be subject to affright and terror, especially marching by night, and in hostile ground, and the enemy near) were in confusion. The army of Nicias leading the way, kept together and got far before ; but that of Demosthenes, which was the greater half, was both severed from the rest, and marched more disorderly. Nevertheless, by the morning betimes they got to the sea side, and entering into the Helorine way, they went on towards the river Cacyparis, to the end when they came thither to march upwards along the river side, through the heart of the country. For they hoped that this way the Siculi, to whom they had sent, would meet them. When they came to the river, here also they found a certain guard of the Syracusans stopping their passage with a wall and with piles. When they had

quickly forced this guard they passed the river, and again marched on to another river called Erineus, for that was the way which the guides directed them.*

"In the mean time the Syracusans and their confederates, as soon as day appeared, and that they knew the Athenians were gone, most of them accusing Gylippus, as if he had let them go with his consent, followed them with speed the same way, which they easily understood they were gone, and about dinner-time overtook them. When they were come up to those with Demosthenes, who were the hindmost, and had marched more slowly and disorderly than the other part had done, as having been put into disorder in the night, they fell upon them and fought. And the Syracusan horsemen hemmed them in, and forced them up into a narrow compass, the more easily now, because they were divided from the rest. Now the army of Nicias was gone by this time one hundred† and fifty furlongs further on. For he led away the faster, because he thought not that their safety consisted in staying and fighting voluntarily, but rather in a speedy retreat, and then only fighting when they could not choose. But Demosthenes was both in greater and in more continual toil, in respect that he marched in the rear, and consequently was pressed by the enemy. And seeing the Syracusans pursuing him, he went not on, but put his men in order to fight, till by his stay he was encompassed and reduced, he and the Athenians with him, into great disorder. For being shut up within a place enclosed round with a wall, through which there was a road from side to side, and in it a considerable number of olive-trees, they were charged from all sides at once with the enemies' shot. For the Syracusans assaulted them in this kind, and not in close battle, upon very good reason. For to hazard battle against men desperate was not so much for theirs, as for the Athe-

* Supposing that the enemy had already occupied the valley of the Cacyparis; and hoping to reach the interior by turning up this valley.

† Goeller and Arnold read fifty stadia only.

nians' advantage. And besides, their success being now manifest, they spared themselves that they should not waste men, and thought by this kind of fight, to subdue and take them alive.

"Whereupon after they had plied the Athenians and their confederates all day long from every side with shot, and saw that with their wounds and other annoyance, they were already tired, Gylippus and the Syracusans and their confederates first made proclamation that if any of the islanders would come over to them, they should be at liberty; and the men of some few cities went over. And by and by they made agreement with all the rest that were with Demosthenes, 'that they should deliver up their arms, and none of them be put to death, neither violently nor by bonds, nor by want of the necessaries of life.' And they all yielded, to the number of 6000 men, and the silver they had they laid it all down, casting it into the hollow of targets, and filled with the same four targets. And these men they carried presently into the city.

"Nicias and those that were with him attained the same day to the river Erineus, which passing, he caused his army to sit down upon a certain ground, more elevated than the rest; where the Syracusans the next day overtook and told him, that those with Demosthenes had yielded themselves, and willed him to do the like. But he, not believing it, took truce for a horseman to inquire the truth. Upon return of the horseman, and word that they had yielded, he sent a herald to Gylippus and the Syracusans, saying that he was content to compound on the part of the Athenians, to repay whatsoever money the Syracusans had laid out, so that his army might be suffered to depart; and that till payment of the money were made, he would deliver them hostages, Athenians, every hostage rated at a talent. But Gylippus and the Syracusans refusing the condition, charged them, and having hemmed them in, plied them with shot, as they had done the other army, from every side, till evening. This part also of the army, was pinched with the want both of victual and other necessaries. Never-

theless, waiting for the quiet of the night, they were about to march; but no sooner took they their arms up, than the Syracusans perceiving it gave the alarm. Whereupon the Athenians finding themselves discovered, sat down again, all but 300, who, breaking by force through the guards, marched as far as they could that night.

“ And Nicias when it was day led his army forward, the Syracusans and their confederates still pressing them in the same manner, shooting and darting at them from every side. The Athenians hastened to get the river Asinarus, not only because they were urged on every side by the assault of the many horsemen, and other multitude, and thought to be more at ease when they were over the river, but out of weariness also and desire to drink. When they were come unto the the river, they rushed in without any order, every man striving who should first get over. But the pressing of the enemy made the passage now more difficult; for being forced to take the river in heaps, they fell upon and trampled one another under their feet: and falling amongst the spears and utensils of the army, some perished presently, and others, catching hold of one another, were carried away together down the stream. And not only the Syracusans standing along the farther bank, being a steep one, killed the Athenians with their shot from above, as they were many of them greedily drinking, and troubling one another in the hollow of the river, but the Peloponnesians came also down and slew them with their swords, and those especially that were in the river.* And very soon the water was corrupted; nevertheless they drunk it, foul as it was with blood and mire, and many also fought for it.

* “The Syracusan heavy-armed infantry seems to have been of a very inferior description, and never to have encountered the Athenians with effect, except when supported by their cavalry. So the disciplined troops of Peloponnesus under Gylippus alone, ventured to close with the enemy, while the Syracusans confined themselves to harassing them from a distance with their missiles.”—*Arnold*.

"In the end, when many dead lay heaped in the river, and the army was utterly defeated, part at the river, and part (if any got away) by the horsemen, Nicias yielded himself unto Gylippus (having more confidence in him than in the Syracusans), 'to be for his own person at the discretion of him and the Lacedæmonians, and no further slaughter to be made of the soldiers.' Gylippus from thenceforth commanded to take prisoners. So the residue, except such as they secreted* (which were many), they carried alive into the city. They sent also to pursue the 300, which had broken out from the camp in the night, and took them. That which was left together of this army to the public was not much; but they that were conveyed away by stealth were very many: and all Sicily was filled with them, because they were not taken as those with Demosthenes were, upon terms of capitulation. Besides, a great part of these were slain; for the slaughter at this time was exceeding great, none greater in all the Sicilian war. They were also not a few that died in those other assaults in their march. Nevertheless many also escaped, some then presently, and some by running away after servitude, the rendezvous of whom was Catana.†

"The Syracusans and their confederates being come together, returned with their prisoners, all they could get, and with the spoil, into the city. As for all the other prisoners of the Athenians and their confederates, they put themselves into the quarries, as the safest custody. But Nicias and Demosthenes they killed against Gylippus's will. For Gylippus thought the victory would be very honourable, if, over and above all his other success, he could carry home both the generals of the enemy of Lacedæmon. And it fell out that the one of

* That is, such as the captors concealed, to make slaves of them for their own private advantage.

† A minute account of the transactions of the siege, of the geography of the neighbourhood of Syracuse, and the portion of country traversed by the Athenians, will be found at the end of the third volume of Arnold's Thucydides.

them, Demosthenes, was their greatest enemy, for the things he had done in the island,* and at Pylus; and the other, upon the same occasion, their greatest friend. For Nicias had earnestly laboured to have those prisoners which were taken in the island to be set at liberty, by persuading the Athenians to the peace. For which cause the Lacedæmonians were inclined to love him; and it was principally in confidence of that that he surrendered himself to Gylippus. But certain Syracusans (as it is reported), some of them for fear (because they had been tampering with him), lest being examined upon this matter, he should disclose something to disturb their present enjoyment; and others (especially the Corinthians) fearing he might get away by corruption of one or other (being wealthy), and work them some mischief afresh, having persuaded their confederates to the same, killed him. For these, or for causes near unto these, was he put to death; being the man that, of all the Grecians of my time, had least deserved to be brought to so great a degree of misery, on account of his regular observance and respect towards the gods.

“As for those in the quarries, the Syracusans handled them at first but ungently; for in this hollow place, first the sun and suffocating air (being without roof), annoyed them one way; and on the other side, the nights coming upon that heat, autumnal and cold, put them (by reason of the alteration) into strange diseases. Especially because for want of room they did all things in one and the same place, and the carcases of such as died of their wounds, or vicissitudes of weather, or the like, lay there in heaps. Also the smell was intolerable, besides that they were afflicted with hunger and thirst. For for eight months together they allowed them no more but to every man a cotyle† of water by the day, and two cotypes of corn: and whatsoever misery is probable that men in such a place may suffer, they suffered. Some

* Sphacteria.

† A small measure about half a pint.

seventy days they lived thus thronged. Afterwards retaining the Athenians, and such Sicilians and Italians as were of the army with them, they sold the rest. How many were taken in all, it is hard to say exactly; but they were seven thousand* at the fewest. And this, in my opinion, was the greatest action that happened in all this war, or at all, that we have heard of among the Grecians, being to the victors most glorious, and most calamitous to the vanquished. For being wholly overcome in every kind, and receiving small loss in nothing, their army and fleet, and all that ever they had, perished (as they used to say) with an universal destruction. Few of many returned home. And thus passed the business concerning Sicily."

A pleasing anecdote, related by Plutarch, relieves in part the fate of these unhappy men. Many Athenians, who fell into the hands of private masters, found the means of procuring kinder treatment by recitations of the masterpieces of literature, with which the minds even of the poorest Athenians were usually stored; especially the tragedies of Euripides, the favourite dramatic poet of the Sicilian Greeks. Many are said to have visited him on their return to Attica, to own themselves indebted to him for liberty, granted as a recompense for communicating what they recollected of his works. This is strong testimony to the scarcity of manuscripts, and the consequent value of knowledge to its possessor. The same cause enabled these captive Athenians to purchase freedom, and the philosophers and sophists to reap such golden harvests from their lectures; literature was entirely dependent upon oral communication.

Forty thousand men, of whom a large proportion were veteran soldiers of the second military power in Greece, ought to have made a better defence. But they were dispirited, and commanded by a general unequal to the emergency. Nicias possessed many admirable qualities; respect for the gods, honesty, personal courage, and dignity of character when not confronted with an Athe-

* Free men, that is.

nian assembly; and they shone perhaps more brightly in the concluding than in any other scene of his life; but his courage was of the passive rather than the active sort, and he did not possess the power of rapid observation and decision which mark the accomplished general, and are most especially required to extricate an army from a false position. So far from pursuing the plan laid down in his speech, the first day's retreat did not exceed five miles, the next was less than three; and when, after eight days of marching and fighting, the Athenian army surrendered, it was not twenty miles distant from Syracuse. Want of promptitude in the first instance suffered the Syracusans to pre-occupy the passes. How far the obstacles which Nicias had then to surmount may justify his tardiness it is difficult to say. Superior numbers and discipline in the hands of an able general might have done much to counterbalance the advantage of position. The Athenians were placed in difficult circumstances; yet not so difficult as the 10,000 in Persia, or many others who have yet lived to laugh at their enemy.

It is not fair to estimate the character of this expedition by its results, for no foresight could have anticipated that Athens, the mistress of the sea, would be so completely foiled on her own element, as that even the power of return should be denied to her defeated army. But without judging things by their events, a method which renders criticism of the past comparatively easy, there are ample grounds to prove the impolicy of entering upon such a scheme of conquest at such a time. The Athenians were already engaged in a war fully commensurate with their strength, and which their utmost exertions had been unable to bring to a happy close. Their wealth and power were derived chiefly from colonies and subject cities, of which several were in open revolt, and all more or less disaffected. Eubœa itself, the most important, and from its situation the most easily controlled, of these dependencies, was so discontented, that to prevent its defection was the first care of the administration, as soon as news arrived of the Sicilian defeat. It was under these circumstances that

they undertook a war, characterized by Thucydides as not much less than that against the Peloponnesians,* and having for its object the conquest† of an island about nine times as large as Attica, and inhabited not by a rude or effeminate population, but by rich and powerful cities of their own countrymen. The enterprise, hazardous in itself, was rendered more so by the length of the voyage, according to the methods of navigation then in use, which prevented succour being sent, or remedy applied to any sudden reverse; and on this hazardous service, at this critical time, a body of troops was sent, not too large for its object, but far larger than the state could afford to lose. That their destruction was believed to be a deathblow is evident from Thucydides. "Everything from every place grieved them, and fear and astonishment, the greatest that ever they were in, beset them round. For they were not only grieved for the loss, which both every man in particular and the whole city sustained, of so many men-at-arms, horsemen and serviceable men, the like whereof they saw was not left; but seeing they had neither galleys enough in their haven, nor money in their treasury, nor able seamen‡ in their galleys, were even desperate at that present of their safety, and thought the enemy out of Sicily would come forthwith with their fleet into Piræus (especially after vanquishing of so great a navy), and that the enemy here would surely now, with double preparation in every kind, press them to the utmost both by sea and land, and be aided therein by their revolting confederates."§ Thanks to their own activity and to the supineness of their enemy, this loss did not immediately prove fatal; but the result of the war would pro-

* Thucyd., vi. 1.

† "And though it were thus great, yet the Athenians longed very much to send an army against it out of a desire to bring it all unto subjection (which was the true motive), but as having withal this fair pretext of aiding their kinsmen and new confederates."—vi. 6.

‡ *ὀπηστας*.—See above.

§ Thucd., viii. 1

bably have been very different, had the lives and treasure wasted in Sicily been devoted for their country in some better chosen cause.

“ Nick, young Nick, the deacon used to say to me (his name was Nicol as well as mine; sae folk ca’d us in their daffin’, young Nick and auld Nick), Nick; said he, never put your arm out further than you can easily draw it back again.” Baillie Jarvie’s maxim is as applicable to political affairs as to commercial and good in both. He whose fortune is already desperate may stake all on one cast; for the prosperous and powerful to do so is madness. Had Napoleon’s ambition not blinded him to this simple rule of caution, he might have died on the imperial throne: he stretched his arm too far when he marched to Moscow. No two persons could be more unlike than Napoleon and Nicias: and it is worth observing that tempers diametrically opposite led these two generals into the same error. Both tempted their fortune after the hour of success was past, and, when active measures could no longer be pursued, remained in idleness, from mere want of resolution to confess a failure by their actions; Nicias, for want of moral courage to face an unreasonable master, whose mortification was not likely to be anywise lessened by being reminded that the defeated general had always disapproved of his commission; Napoleon, from his sensitive pride, which clung to any pretence, however thin, which could conceal from himself, if not from others, that the victor of a hundred battles was at length foiled. The celebrated campaign of 1812 bears indeed a nearer resemblance to the Sicilian than to the Scythian war, and on that account might better have been reserved for this place. But there is one portion of it still unnoticed, which displays in their perfection those military qualities, the want of which proved fatal to Nicias and the Athenian army.

We allude to the remarkable skill, courage, and good fortune with which Marshal Ney extricated himself from circumstances apparently as hopeless as any that men could be placed in. It has already been stated that the French army on quitting Smolensk was distributed

into four divisions, which marched on different days.* Ney commanded the last. The Russian army lay in strength between that city and Oreza, but their opposition was undecided, and the three first divisions forced their way past, though with severe loss. When he had only the rear guard to deal with, Kutusoff came to a resolution which if adopted in the first instance might have ended at once the campaign and the reign of Napoleon, and took post across the road, so as to bar all passage, except such as should be cut through the centre of his army. On the second afternoon after he left Smolensk, Ney came in view of the Russians. They consisted of 80,000 men, with a powerful artillery. The two armies were posted on opposite sides of a deep ravine, which at this point intersected the plain. Kutusoff sent an officer to summon Ney to surrender, stating the amount of his force, and offering permission to send one of his officers to verify his representations by inspection. While the envoy was still speaking, forty guns opened their fire upon the French. Ney exclaimed in anger, "A marshal never surrenders; neither do men treat under fire. You are my prisoner." The artillery redoubled their thunder; the hills, before cold and silent, resembled volcanoes in eruption, and then, said the French soldiers, enthusiastic in praise of their favourite leader, this man of fire seemed to feel in his true element.

His whole force consisted of only 5000 men and six guns. Opposed were 80,000, well armed and well fed, and strong in cavalry and artillery. The French vanguard of 1500 men passed along the road into the ravine, and dashed gallantly up the opposite side; but the front line of the Russians met them at the top, and at once shattered their feeble column. Ney rallied them, and caused them to be formed in reserve, while he led on in person the main body of 3000 men. He made no speeches; he advanced at their head, which is worth all the oratorical flourishes in the world. Meanwhile 400 Illyrians had been detached to take the enemy in flank. The im-

* See vol. i. p. 229.

petuosity of his charge broke and scattered the first opposing line, and without stop or hesitation he advanced upon the second; but ere they reached it, a tempest of cannon and musket-balls whistled through the column: it staggered, broke, and retreated.

Convinced that it was impossible to force his way, he returned to his former position on the other side of the ravine, drew up what remained of his troops, and awaited the attack. Russian inactivity (we cannot call it caution) saved him, as it had saved those who went before. A single corps might have forced Ney's position against the weak body who now defended it; but the enemy contented himself with maintaining a murderous cannonade, to which the six guns feebly replied. Still the soldiers, though falling thickly, remained constant at their posts, deriving comfort and confidence from the tranquillity of their chief.

At nightfall Ney gave orders to retreat towards Smolensk. All who heard it were struck with amazement. The Emperor, and their comrades, and France, lay in front: he proposed to turn back into a country which they had too much reason to detest and fly. Even the aide-de-camp to whom the command was issued stood as if he could hardly believe his ears, until it was repeated in a brief and decided tone. They marched backwards for an hour, and then stopped; and the Marshal, who had remained in the rear, rejoined them. Their situation may be thus summed up. Between them and the Emperor lay an army, which they had tried in vain to force. Guides they had none: on the left the country was open, but there was little chance of turning unobserved the flank of an enemy furnished with a numerous and active cavalry; besides that the time consumed in such an operation would have left little hope of ever rejoining the main body of the French. On the right the liberty of movement was curtailed by the Dnieper, which flowed in that direction; its precise situation and the possibility of crossing it being unknown. Ney's plan was already conceived. He descended into a ravine, and caused the snow to be cleared away until the course of a rivulet was

exposed. "This," he said, must be one of the feeders of the Dnieper. It will conduct us to the river, and on the further bank of that river lies our safety." They followed it as their guide, and about eight o'clock in the evening arrived upon the bank of the Dnieper. Their joy was complete on seeing the river frozen over. Above and below it was still open, but just at the spot where they reached it a sharp bend in its course had stopped the floating ice, which the frost had connected into a continuous though a slight bridge. An officer volunteered to try its strength. He reached the opposite bank, and returned. "It would bear the men," he said, "and some few horses. But a thaw was commencing, and there was no time to be lost." The fatigue and difficulty of a nocturnal march had scattered the troops, as well as the disorganized band of stragglers which attended on them; and Ney, though pressed to cross at once, resolved to give three hours' time for rallying. This interval of repose, even at so critical a moment, he spent, wrapped in his cloak, in deep and placid sleep upon the river bank.

Towards midnight they began to pass. Those who first tried the ice warned their companions that it bent under them, and sunk so low that they were up to their knees in water. The deep, threatening sound of cracks was heard on all sides, and those who still remained on the bank hesitated to trust themselves to so frail a support. Ney ordered them to pass one by one. Much precaution was necessary, for large chasms had opened, doubly concealed by the darkness of night, and by the general covering of water. Men hesitated, but they were driven on by the impatient cries of those who remained on the bank, still ignorant of the dangers of the passage, and goaded by the constant fear of the enemy's approach.

The carriages and cannon attendant on the army were of necessity left behind, and those of the wounded who were unable to make their way across. The chief of the hospital department tried the experiment of sending some waggon-loads of sick and wounded men across the ice. A scream of agony was heard when they had

reached the middle of the stream, succeeded by a deep silence. The ice had given way, and all perished except one officer, severely wounded, who supported himself upon a sheet of ice, and, crawling from one piece to another, reached the bank.

Ney had now placed the river between himself and the Russian army by a stroke of promptitude and courage rarely equalled. But his situation was far from enviable. He was in a desert of forests, without roads and without guides, two days' march from Orcha, where he expected to meet Napoleon. As the troops advanced, the foremost men observed a beaten way; but there was little comfort to be derived from this, for they distinguished the marks of artillery and horses proceeding in the same direction as themselves. Ney as usual took the lion's counsel, and followed those menacing tracks to a village, which he surrounded and assaulted, in which there were 100 cossacks, who were roused from their sleep only to find themselves prisoners. Here the French found comforts of which they had known little since their departure from Moscow; food, clothes, comfortable quarters, and rest. What a blessed relief to men who within the last twelve hours had been hopeless of escape from death in battle, and then exposed to scarce less imminent danger of perishing in a half-frozen river!

From hence it was two days' march to Orcha, where Ney arrived on November 20, his followers being reduced to 1500 men. He had baulked the Russian regular troops; but he found Platoff and his cossacks upon the right bank of the Dnieper, and suffered severely from their marauding warfare. Napoleon had given him up for lost; when he heard that he had rejoined the army he leaped for joy, as he exclaimed, "Then I have saved my eagles! I have 200,000,000 in the Tuileries: I would have given them all rather than lose such a man!"*

An anecdote of similar resolution and readiness, curious on account of the nature of the danger to be avoided, is

* Ségur, Gourgaud, Napoleon in Russia.

told by the Florentine historians of the fourteenth century. At that time Italian warfare was chiefly carried on by hired soldiers, men usually of profligate lives and broken fortunes, unfitted by the licence of a camp for peaceful industry, or driven to forsake it by the insecurity of property in those calamitous times, when he who sowed the seed had no assurance that he should reap the harvest. The long wars between France and England under Edward III. swelled the numbers of these men to a fearful extent; and the reader who will consult Froissart concerning the state of France at this period, will there find a fearful picture of the misrule and misery produced by men of this description, who, when there was no regular war to occupy their swords, formed themselves into troops, took possession by force or fraud of some castle or stronghold, and lived by levying contributions on the peasantry, and plundering all persons who came in their way. Such spirits readily flocked round the banner of any soldier of repute who offered a price for their services; nor were men of birth and reputation wanting to lead them into the foreign market, who readily overlooked the character of their followers in consideration of the wealth and consequence to be derived from their support. Among the most distinguished, and also the most honourable of this class, was an Englishman, named Sir John Hawkwood, long practised in the Italian wars, and at the time we speak of, in the service of Florence. In the year 1391, that city being at war with the Duke of Milan, planned a double invasion of his dominions. The Count d'Armagnac, a French nobleman of high military renown, was hired to invade Milan from the west, while on the east Hawkwood advanced from Vicenza, through Verona and Brescia. The two armies were intended to unite and lay siege to Milan; but the scheme was deranged by the defeat and total destruction of the Count d'Armagnac, and Hawkwood, who, before he heard that news, had advanced within fifteen miles of the city, on a sudden found himself in imminent danger.

On looking at a map, the reader will observe that all

the country between the Alps and Po is intersected by numerous rivers ; which, like those of Holland, for the most part flow at a higher level than the neighbouring plains, and are kept within their course by lofty dikes. Hawkwood had crossed the Adige, Mincio, and Oglio ; and consequently when Jacopo del Verme, the Milanese general, marched against him at the head of a superior force elated with victory, his situation became very uncomfortable. To give battle was hazardous, for a defeat with three large rivers in his rear would have been utter destruction ; and it was scarcely less dangerous to attempt to cross them, without having first gained some advantages, and struck terror into the enemy. In this dilemma he remained quiet for a time, retained his soldiers strictly within the camp, without regarding the insults and provocations of the enemy, until this apparent timidity led them into an imprudent bravado, which gave him an opportunity of attacking to advantage and routing them with considerable slaughter.

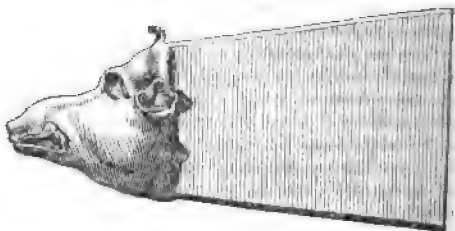
He judged rightly that this blow would keep his adversary quiet for a little while, and immediately broke up his camp and crossed the Oglio without hindrance ; the enemy following, but being too late, or too much cowed to molest him. He passed the Mincio also, and was then in a plain, enclosed by the dikes of the Po, Mincio, and Adige, and lying below the level of those rivers. The last was still to be crossed ; and it presented greater difficulties than the Oglio and Mincio, both on account of the greater volume and velocity of its stream, and because the enemy had pre-occupied and fortified its dikes. Hawkwood was encamped on a small eminence in the plain,—we may suppose rather at a loss how to prosecute his retreat,—when suddenly the whole of the low country was flooded. They had cut the dikes of the Adige, in hope of drowning or starving the invader into submission. The inundation gained ground every hour, and threatened the camp itself. As far as the eye could reach all was water. Provisions began to fail ; and Del Verme, who with his troops shut up the only road to escape, sent Hawkwood the enigmatical present of a fox

in a cage. The Englishman received the gift, and requested the messenger to carry back word that the fox seemed nothing dismayed, and probably knew very well by what door he should get out of his cage.

"It is generally confessed," says Poggio, "that no other captain, except Hawkwood, whose sayings and doings deserve to be commemorated among the subtleties of ancient generals and orators, could have overcome the difficulties and dangers in which the Florentine army was now involved." It is not every one assuredly that would have nerve to adopt the measure which he adopted. In the middle of the night he abandoned his camp, trusting himself and his army boldly to the inundated plain, and shaped his course parallel to the dikes of the Adige. He advanced all the next day, and part of the succeeding night, through water up to the horses' bellies; his progress delayed by the deep mud, and by numerous trenches which intersected the fields; and which, beneath the universal covering of water, could no longer be distinguished from the solid ground. In this manner he traversed all the valley of Verona; at length, opposite to Castel Baldo, he crossed the dry bed of the Adige, there exhausted of its waters, and found repose and refreshment for his exhausted army within the Paduan frontier. The weaker horses, and a large part of the infantry, perished in this march by suffocation, fatigue, and cold; some saved themselves by clinging to the horses' tails. But the bulk of the army was saved, and Jacopo del Verme took care not to tempt the waters by engaging in so hazardous a pursuit.*

* Sismondi, *Hist. Rep. Ital.* Poggio Bracciolini, *Hist. Florent.*

CHAPTER XVII.



Prow of an ancient vessel found at Genoa.

Sketch of the interval which elapsed between the defeat in Sicily and the battle of Arginusæ—Battle of Arginusæ—Prosecution and death of the Athenian generals—Massacre of the De Witts—End of the Peloponnesian war.

THE catastrophe of the Sicilian army was heard at Athens with consternation. In that army, besides light-armed troops and slaves, 10,000 citizens were lost, the flower of the republic and its allied, or rather dependent, states; and the private sorrow from which few houses were exempt, was increased by the alarming perplexity how such another force could be raised from the exhausted population, or such a fleet rebuilt from the exhausted treasury of the state. It was generally believed through Greece that the war would soon come to an end; and if Sparta had been prepared to follow up

with energy the blow struck in Sicily, Athens probably would have fallen. But though the project of wresting the dominion of the sea from her seemed no longer visionary, as it had seemed earlier in the war, in which case, deprived both of her territories at home and of her commerce and allies abroad, she must have yielded, the Lacedæmonians at this critical juncture possessed no fleet, and the autumn and winter, which they spent in collecting one, were diligently employed by the Athenians in measures suited to the present emergency. Thus at the close of the nineteenth year of the war, each party, says Thucydides, seemed as it were preparing for the beginning of a war. But at this time a third party appeared in the contest. The King of Persia had discovered that to supply the Greeks with the means of mutual destruction was much better policy than uniting them against himself by measures of open hostility; and Athens, from its restless spirit, as well as from the recollection of former injuries, was the object of especial dislike and fear to that monarchy. From henceforward the want of a public revenue, which had more than anything cramped the exertions of Sparta, was obviated from the inexhaustible riches of Persia.

The seven years which elapsed between the defeat in Sicily and the battle of Arginusæ, are perhaps the busiest and most curious portion of the war. Scarce two years passed before the hope of supplanting the Lacedæmonians in the favour of Tissaphernes, satrap of Lydia, and diverting to themselves the wealth which was animating their enemies, induced the once proud people of Athens to divest themselves of the sovereignty and establish an oligarchical government. After a short existence of four months this government was overthrown and a new one established, in which the supreme power was vested in an assembly of 5000 citizens, of which all persons entitled to serve in the heavy-armed infantry were constituted members. "And now for the first time in my remembrance," says Thucydides, "the Athenians appear to have possessed a government of unusual excellence; for there was a moderate intermixture of the few and the

many. And this, after so many misfortunes past, first made the city again to raise its head."* Alcibiades, who had been a main promoter of this counter-revolution, was now recalled, and under his able guidance a series of victories ensued which bade fair to raise the commonwealth to its former splendour. In the twenty-fourth year of the war, and the sixth from his banishment, he led home his victorious troops, and was received with extraordinary favour, being appointed commander-in-chief, with greater powers than had ever been intrusted to such an officer. But the Athenians had not yet learnt steadiness. Within less than a year he was dismissed, in consequence of an unimportant defeat sustained by one of his subordinates, who, during his absence from the fleet, against express orders, had ventured a battle; and command was given to a board of ten generals, with Conon at their head.

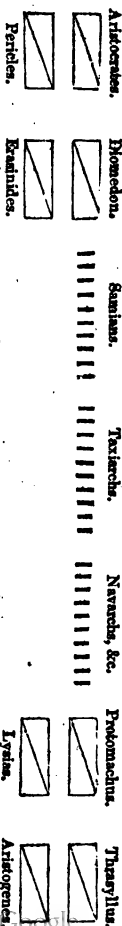
In the twenty-fifth year of the war, as Conon was passing Lesbos with a fleet of seventy triremes, the Spartan general, Callicratidas, obtained an opportunity of attacking him with far superior forces, compelled him to run for the harbour of Mitylene, took thirty of his ships, and formed the siege of that town by land and sea. When this unpleasant news reached Athens, every nerve was strained to effect their general's deliverance. In thirty days, 110 triremes were equipped and manned, though 20,000 men are calculated to have been required for the purpose. All persons of military age, both slaves and freemen, were pressed into the service; many knights even, who were legally exempted from this service, went on board. The fleet was increased by forty ships or more from different allies, and then sailed for Mitylene to deliver Conon.

When Callicratidas heard that the Athenian fleet was at Samos, he left fifty ships, commanded by Eteonicus, to maintain the siege, and put to sea himself with 120. The Athenians spent that night at Arginusæ, a cluster of islands between the southern promontory of Lesbos and the main land. In the morning both parties put to

* Thucyd. viii. 97.

sea: eight of the ten Athenian generals were on board the fleet.

Xenophon tells us that the superiority in sailing, or rather rowing, which had enabled the Athenians at the commencement of the war to gain such distinguished successes under the command of Phormion and others, was now reversed: and that from the greater swiftness of their ships, the Lacedæmonians were more likely to profit by the rapid evolutions, in which the naval science of that time was shown; especially that called the dieplus, which seems to have consisted in dashing through the enemy's line, avoiding the direct shock of his beak, but sweeping away his oars if possible by an oblique attack. To guard against this danger the Athenians adopted the following disposition of their fleet: in either wing were four squadrons, each of fifteen ships, and each commanded by one of the generals, eight of whom were on board the fleet, drawn up in a double line. The left of the centre was held by ten Samian ships; then came ten Athenian ships, each containing a military officer of rank, called taxiarch, which seems to correspond in grade most closely to the rank of colonel; next to them, each in his own ship, three navarchs or admirals, two of whom, Thrasybulus and Theramenes, are names well known in the history of the time, and the few allied ships, which were not elsewhere stationed. All these were in single line. We have here a good illustration of the close connection between the military and naval service, and may infer that officers of distinction in the one were not expected to serve in inferior situations in the other. The distribution of the fleet will be more readily understood from the annexed diagram.



The Lacedæmonian fleet was formed in a single line.

Hermon of Megara, the pilot, or master rather of Callicratidas's ship, observed that the Athenians were much the most numerous, and said that it would be well to retreat. Callicratidas answered, that Sparta would not be worse inhabited if he were dead, but it was shameful to run away. The battle lasted long; but when Callicratidas, who led the Spartan right wing, was thrown overboard by the shock of his own trireme against another, and the Athenian right wing gained the advantage over their opponents, the Spartan fleet betook itself to flight, with the loss of seventy ships or upwards. The victors returned to their station at Arginusæ, their number diminished only by twenty-five ships, but nearly all the crews of these had perished.

A double duty now claimed their attention: the one to save those of their countrymen who still clung to life upon the floating wreck, the other to relieve Conon and complete the destruction of the Peloponnesian fleet by surprising the squadron left to maintain the siege of Mitylene. We can detect no error in the course adopted, which was to leave forty-six ships to collect the wreck, and sail direct for Mitylene with the others. For some unexplained reason, however, none of the eight generals remained to superintend the former service, which was intrusted to Theramenes and Thrasybulus. But a violent storm came on, and confined both divisions of the fleet at Arginusæ; while Eteonicus, to whom a light vessel had conveyed the news of his commander's defeat, seized the interval for escape thus granted to him with much readiness. Fearful of attack from Conon, now nearly equal to him in naval force, if he manifested the necessity of retreat, he bade the vessel which conveyed the news put back to sea without communicating it to any but himself, and then return crowned and decked with the symbols of victory, and shouting that Callicratidas had gotten the victory of the Athenians. He then offered the usual thanks-offering for good news, and that very night broke up the siege and departed. The Athenians seem to have been deficient in activity, for

their first information of this was derived from the arrival of Conon at Arginussæ, as they were preparing to leave it. They then sailed to Chios, whither the Peloponnesians had repaired; and having done nothing, returned to their usual station at Samos.

How it happened that so powerful a fleet, under able commanders, not only did, but apparently attempted nothing, in prosecution of so signal a success, is left entirely unexplained; and we might almost suspect from the meagre statement of facts, without explanation or comment, that Xenophon knew more of the matter than for some reason or other he chose to tell. The Athenians, he continues, displaced their ten generals, excepting Conon: but the cause of their dissatisfaction is not stated. Six of the eight who had been in the battle returned home at once. On their return, Erasimides was immediately accused by Archidemus, who was at that time the popular leader, of embezzling public property and of misconduct in his command. He was committed to prison. Subsequently the other five were also committed to answer to the people for their conduct; and at the first assembly several persons, with Theramenes at their head, came forward to assert that the generals ought to be brought to trial for not saving their shipwrecked countrymen. The accused made a short answer (for they were not allowed to speak at length, as they had a right to do), stating all that had passed; how they had resolved themselves to follow up their advantage, leaving Theramenes and Thrasybulus, men of military rank and confessed ability, to perform the other service. "These, if any," they said, "are the persons to blame; yet though they accuse us, we will not bring a false charge against them, of neglecting what the violence of the storm rendered it impossible to do."* And these statements they brought forward witnesses to prove.

This short defence made a considerable impression, and many persons offered to become sureties for the accused. But the evening had now closed in, and it was

* Xenophon, *Hellenica*, lib. i. c. 7.

said to be too dark to distinguish the show of hands. The matter was therefore adjourned to the next assembly, and it was voted that in the mean time the council should determine in what manner the generals should be tried, —a precaution which shows that they were not meant to have fair play, since the form of trial was as distinctly settled in Athens as in England; but it gave the accused full opportunity for making his defence, and therefore did not suit the purpose of the prosecutors. In the mean time came on the festival called *Apaturia*, at which members of the same family and the same tribe met in social intercourse; and *Theramenes* took advantage of the kindly feelings excited upon the occasion to raise a prejudice against his intended victims, by sending about the city men dressed in black with their heads shaven, in the character of relations of those who had been lost at *Arginusæ*.

At the next general assembly *Callixenus* explained the scheme of trial recommended by the council. "The people," he said, "had already heard the charge and the answer to it (an answer, be it remembered, which had been limited to a few words), and might therefore proceed at once to vote. Two vases therefore would be set apart to each tribe, and those who thought the generals culpable for not saving the wrecked crews, would cast their ball into the one, those who did not think them culpable into the other. If the majority were of the former opinion, the punishment would be death and confiscation of property." At this period a man came forward with a story that he had saved his own life on a flour-barrel, and that his dying comrades charged him, if he himself escaped, to tell the Athenians that the generals had abandoned those citizens who had so well served their country. *Euryptolemus*, a name which occurs in history only on this occasion, made a stand in favour of the accused, and threatened to prosecute *Callixenus* for submitting an illegal proposition to the assembly, and a part concurred with him; but the majority cried, that it was a fine thing if anyone should say that the people might not do as it liked: and *Ly-*

ciscus proposed, that all who interfered with the proceedings of the assembly should be included in the same vote with the generals. Euryptolemus therefore was compelled to let things take their course. Still the presidents of the assembly refused to propose an illegal question; but they were frightened and overborne by clamour, except the celebrated Socrates, who steadily refused to act contrary to law. Euryptolemus made another attempt to procure the generals leave to plead their own cause, by moving an amendment to the proposition of Callixenus: but he failed; the scheme of the council was agreed to, and by a majority of votes sentence of death was passed upon the eight generals present at Arginusæ. Those six who had been unlucky enough to return to Athens were forthwith executed.

Not long after, Xenophon adds, the Athenians repented of what they had done, and voted that those who had deceived the people should be prosecuted, and find sureties for their appearance. Other civil contests arose, which gave them an opportunity of escape. Callixenus, at a later period, returned to Athens; lived for a time the object of hate to all, and died of hunger in a time of famine.*

The Germans, by the report of Tacitus, held solemn and deep drinking-bouts for the consideration of all important business, upon the old maxim that in wine there is no deceit; but they took care to reconsider their decision the next morning. Some court of temperate review would have preserved the Athenians from many heinous crimes, into which they were led by a temper unusually excitable, and when ruled by prejudice and passion, less fitted to judge wisely and equitably than the phlegmatic temper of the Germans, even under the influence of strong drink. With Theramenes and the accusers this was plainly a party measure, undertaken in total recklessness of right or wrong. In these corrupt motives the people could have no share; on the contrary, they seem to have been acted on at first by a right feeling of indignation at the alleged abandonment of

* Xenoph. Hellen., lib. i. cap. 6, 7.

meritorious citizens. Their fault lay in the readiness with which they discarded gratitude to entertain suspicion; in the blind fury with which, overleaping all law in jealously asserting the people's omnipotence, they followed a mere impulse, a delusion, which the least exercise of judicial calmness would have dispelled. It is true that, when the reign of passion was over, and they returned to their senses, they rendered such amends for their precipitance as were then in their power. But such tardy repentance could neither repair nor expiate the wrong committed; and Athenian repentance generally came too late. Prompt in action, both from temper and from the forms of the state, which required no revision of a decree of the people, no assent from any concurring authority, performance followed close upon resolve. Of the many cruel edicts, repented or unrepented, uttered by the Athenian people, the revocation of the decrees against the Mityleneans, by which all male citizens were condemned to death, is the only one where repentance came in time. It seems a fitting judgment that the signal victory of Arginusæ was the last gained during the war; and that in the next year it was followed by the still more signal defeat at Ægospotami, which laid Athens prostrate at the feet of her haughty rival:

Not strictly analogous to the prosecution of the generals, but a still more memorable example of the cruelty and ingratitude to which party spirit can rouse even a phlegmatic people like the Dutch, the very antipodes of the Athenians in temper, is the murder of the brothers De Witt. Both illustrious, though not equally so, to the elder Holland owes deeper obligations than to any other of her citizens, except those great captains who burst the Spanish yoke. These obligations, and De Witt's high qualities, are best described by a writer qualified to do justice to the subject by the affection of a friend, as well as the penetration of a statesman—Sir William Temple.

“The chief direction of the affairs of Holland had, for eighteen years, been constantly in the hands of their

Pensionary De Witt, a minister of the greatest authority and sufficiency, the greatest application and industry, ever known in their state. In the course of his ministry, he and his party had reduced not only all the civil charges of the government in this province, but in a manner all the military commands of the army, out of the hands of persons affectionate to the Prince of Orange, into those esteemed more sure and fast to the interests of their more popular state. And all this had been attended for so long a course of years with the perpetual success of their affairs, by the growth of their trade, power, and riches at home, and the consideration of their neighbours abroad; yet the general humour of kindness in the people to their own form of government under the Princes of Orange, grew up with the age and virtues of the young Prince, so as to raise the prospect of some unavoidable revolutions among them, for several years before it arrived. And we have seen it grow to that height in this present year, upon the Prince's coming to the two-and-twentieth year of his age (the time assigned him by their constitution for entering upon the public charges of their milice), that though it had found them in peace, it must have occasioned some violent sedition in their state; but meeting with the conjuncture of a foreign invasion, it broke out into so furious a rage of the people, and such general tumults through the whole country, as ended in the blood of their chief ministers; in the displacing all that were suspected to be of their party throughout the government; in the full restitution of the Prince's authority to the highest point any of his ancestors had ever enjoyed; but withal in such a distraction of their councils and their actions, as made way for the easy successes of the French invasion; for the loss of almost five of their provinces in two months' time, and for the general pre-sages of utter ruin to their state."*

* Temple, "Essay on the Origin and Nature of Government."

At the early age of twenty-eight, the firmness and talents displayed by John de Witt in public life had raised him to the chief magistracy of the United Provinces, at a difficult period, when they were engaged in war with England, then under the vigorous direction of Cromwell. That honourable station De Witt held for twenty years, during which that severe war between England and Holland broke out, which was terminated, much to the glory of the latter country, by the expedition up the Medway, and the burning of the English fleet at Sheerness. Of this bold attempt he was himself the adviser. Republican by birth (for his father had been imprisoned in consequence of his steady opposition to the house of Orange), the whole bent of his policy was to frustrate the attempts of the Orange party, who wished to reinstate the young Prince, afterwards William III. of England, in the power and dignities possessed of old times by his family; and as the interests of William were espoused by Charles II. of England, De Witt was induced to seek a counterpoise by cultivating the friendship of France. In consequence of this predilection the war of 1665 broke out, which, after a series of severely contested battles, was terminated by the expedition above mentioned.

De Witt's steady resistance to the elevation of the house of Orange of course procured for him the sincere hatred of the Orange party, who were powerful enough, at different periods, to embarrass his government; still for fifteen years he held his high office of Grand Pensionary of Holland, and at the end of that time was re-elected for a further term of five years. But in the last year, in 1672, the French and English united to declare war against Holland; a powerful army invaded the United Provinces, and William, upon whom the chief military command was conferred, was utterly unable to make head against them. A loud outcry was now raised against all who had ever shown any disposition to support French politics, and De Witt, above all others, became the object of popular hatred. One night he was

attacked and severely wounded by a party of assassins, a danger to which the simplicity of his habits, well befitting the chief magistrate of a republic, gave free access. For "his habit was grave, plain, and popular; his table what only served turn for his family, or a friend; his train was only one man, who performed all the menial service of his house at home, and upon his visits of ceremony, putting on a plain livery cloak, attended his coach abroad; for upon other occasions he was seen usually in the streets on foot and alone, like the commonest burgher of the town. Nor was this manner of life affected, but was the general fashion and mode among all the magistrates of the state."*

While De Witt was kept at home by his wounds, the people of Holland demanded universally the repeal of the perpetual edict, as it was called, by which the Prince of Orange was for ever excluded from the stadtholdership of that province; and it was accordingly repealed. Cornelius De Witt, the brother of John, a man distinguished both in the naval and civil service of his country, was with difficulty induced to sign the revocation of the edict. When told that an armed crowd surrounded his house, threatening his life, if he did not consent to the repeal, "So many bullets," he said, "passed over my head in the late engagement, that I have no fear left, and I would rather wait for another than sign this paper." Shortly after, this brave and manly soldier was charged with being concerned in a plot to murder the Prince of Orange. The informer and only witness, Tichelaer, was a person of infamous character; yet on such evidence as this Cornelius De Witt was thrown into prison at the Hague, and cruelly tortured to extort confession of a plot, the very existence of which, without such a forced confession, could not be established. He bore the trial with unshaken constancy, protesting that if they cut him to pieces, they should not make him confess a thing which he had never even thought of. It is said that under the hands of the executioner he repeated the celebrated lines of Horace—

* Temple, 'Observations on the United Provinces,' ch. ii.

Justum et tenacem propositi virum
 Non civium ardor prava jubentium,
 Non vultus instantis tyranni,
 Mente quatit solida, &c.

Finding it impossible to extort a confession, the court before which he was tried proceeded to pass sentence to the following effect: "The Court of Holland, having examined the documents presented to it by the public prosecutor, the examinations and cross-examinations of the prisoner, and his defence, and having examined all that can throw light on this matter, declares the prisoner stripped of all his offices and dignities, banishes him from the provinces of Holland and West Friesland, without leave ever to return on pain of a severer punishment, and orders him to pay the costs of the prosecution."*

From the technical form in which this document is given in the original, and the signatures appended to it, it appears to be a literal copy of the sentence as delivered by the court. We may observe, therefore, that neither the nature of the charge against De Witt, nor the extent to which it was proved against him, are specified. This is strong evidence of an intent to oppress him to the utmost. Where all is honest, men do not seek to hide the grounds of their decrees. The sentence is every way unjustifiable: if De Witt was guilty, he deserved death, and there can be no doubt but that, could a conviction have been procured, the extreme punishment would have been inflicted; if not, he was entitled to a free acquittal. To inflict infamy and banishment for a suspected crime, even granting too charitable a supposition, that suspicion was entertained, was to graft the worst prerogative of tyranny upon republican institutions. Yet unjustifiable as the sentence was, its leniency gave great offence to the people, who were devoted at this period to the house of Orange, and possessed with a full belief of Cornelius De Witt's guilt.

John De Witt meanwhile had recovered from his wounds, and finding that in the then state of public feel-

* 'Histoire de la Vie et de la Mort des deux illustres Frères, Corneille et Jean de Witt.' Liv. ii. c. 11.

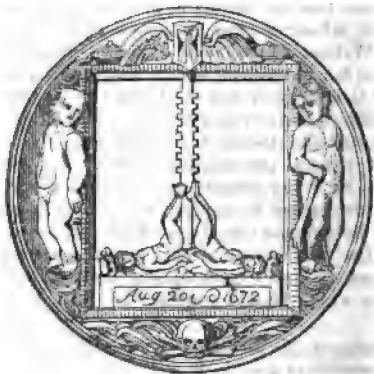
ing, his continuance at the head of affairs was alike undesirable for himself and displeasing to the country, he resigned his office. When his brother was sentenced to exile, he went himself to receive him on his delivery from prison, and probably to do him more honour and testify his own sense of the malice of the charge, and the unworthiness of the treatment which he had received, repaired to the Hague in his coach and four, a state which, as we have said, he was not used to affect. This bravado, though natural, was against the advice of his friends, and not consistent with the usual temper of the man; and it proved even more unfortunate than ill judged. The people, collected by the unusual spectacle, began to murmur at the presumption of one suspected traitor coming in state to insult the laws, and triumph in the escape of a traitor brother from a deserved death. De Witt went to the prison to receive his brother, and convey him to his own house; but Cornelius, with his customary high spirit, replied, that having suffered so much, being innocent, he would not leave the prison like a culprit, but rather remain and appeal from the sentence. John



Obverse of medal struck to commemorate the massacre of the De Witts.

De Witt endeavoured to shake his resolution, but without effect.

Meanwhile Tichelaer the informer, at the instigation, as we are led to believe, of some more powerful persons whose names are studiously concealed, was busily employed in stirring up the populace to riot. Apprehending some disturbance, the states of Holland and West Friesland, which at the time were sitting at the Hague, requested the Prince of Orange to repair thither with a military force. Meanwhile the tumult spread from the lowest people to the burghers, and a furious mob collected round the gates of the prison in which the brothers were still remaining. The military force which had been sent for did not arrive, and that which was in the city was drawn off by the orders of some unnamed person. Actuated by fear, or some worse motive, the gaoler opened the gates, a few of the ringleaders burst in, the brothers were dragged with violence from their chamber, and brutally massacred as soon as they reached the street. We abstain from giving the details of the murder, still more from relating the unequalled atrocities which were



Reverse of the same medal.—Bodies on the scaffold.

perpetrated upon the corpses. But they were dragged to the gibbet, mutilated, and publicly suspended naked by the feet with the heads downward; and the mangled limbs of these upright and patriotic men were offered for sale, and bought at prices of fifteen, twenty, and thirty sols.

According to one story, the gaoler induced John De Witt to visit his brother by a false message, and being in the prison he was not allowed to quit it. A similar message was sent to their father, but being absent from home he escaped the snare. The gaoler, it is said, acted under the orders of a "person of such quality, that he was obliged to obey." In this account, as well as in that which we have above followed, there is an evident wish to throw the blame of the murder on the Prince of Orange, or at least on the leaders of his party. It is asserted, however, that he never spoke of it without the greatest horror. Charges of such magnitude should not be lightly made; nor is there any evidence to fix guilt upon that distinguished monarch. But that there was culpable neglect, if not wilful connivance, seems certain; and the proceedings of the court which sentenced Cornelius, show that the agents of government were nowise squeamish, whatever was the conduct of their chief. Nor did William's subsequent conduct betray much concern either for the interests of justice or of his own reputation; for though the states of Holland voted the murder "detestable in their eyes, and the eyes of all the world," and requested the stadtholder to take proper measures to avenge it, none of the murderers were ever brought to justice. The flimsy pretext for this neglect was, that it would be dangerous to inquire into a deed in which the principal burghers of the Hague were concerned.*

After De Witt's death all his papers were submitted to the most rigorous examination in hope of discovering something which should confirm the popular notion of

* 'Histoire de la Vie et de la Mort des deux illustres Frères, Corneille et Jean de Witt.'

his being traitorously in league with France. One of the persons appointed to perform this service being asked what had been found in De Witt's papers, replied "What could we have found?—nothing but probity."*

We cannot better conclude than with the reflections of the greatest of modern orators upon this event. "The catastrophe of De Witt—the wisest, best, and most truly patriotic minister that ever appeared upon the public stage, as it was an act of the most crying injustice and ingratitude, so likewise it is the most completely disencouraging example that history affords to the lovers of liberty. If Aristides was banished, he was also recalled. If Dion was repaid for his service to the Syracusans by ingratitude, that ingratitude was more than once repented of. If Sidney and Russell died upon the scaffold, they had not the cruel mortification of falling by the hands of the people; ample justice was done to their memory, and the very sound of their names is still animating to every Englishman attached to their glorious cause. But with De Witt fell also his cause and his party; and although a name so respected by all who revere virtue and wisdom when employed in their noblest sphere—the political service of the public, yet I do not know that even to this day any public honours have been paid by them to his memory."†

The conclusion and the result of the Peloponnesian war may here be given in a very few words. The battle of Arginusæ was fought B.C. 406, in the autumn. It seemed to restore the sovereignty of the sea to Athens, and to replace her in that commanding position which had been lost in consequence of the unfortunate expedition to Sicily. So severely was the defeat felt at Sparta, that the Lacedæmonians again made overtures for peace, which were rejected through the instrumentality of Cleophon, a popular leader of the day,‡ as formerly

* 'General Biography.'

† Fox, 'History of James II.,' p. 29.

‡ Clinton, 'Fast. Hellen.' For a notice of this worthy, see the Frogs of Aristophanes, v. 677, ed. Bekker.

similar overtures had been rejected by the influence of Cleon. But the government of Athens, though elated by success, does not appear to have been such as to render a continuance of it probable, as far as we can judge from the scanty records which exist of this period. The rapid and violent changes which had taken place, and such acts as the execution of the generals who commanded at Arginusæ, were of a nature to destroy all concord and all feeling of confidence; and the administration again resorted to the inefficient course of appointing a board of generals to command the fleet. Of the six who composed it, Conon alone is known to us, except in reference to this transaction. The Lacedæmonian fleet in the Asiatic seas was now under the able guidance of Lysander; and by his good management, and in consequence of the culpable negligence of the Athenian generals, the Athenian fleet of 180 triremes was surprised while lying in the Hellespont at Ægospotami, and captured, with the sole exception of nine ships belonging to the division of Conon, who escaped in consequence of being more on his guard. "After this Lysander, calling a meeting of the confederates, proposed for their consideration the question, what was to be done with the prisoners. Then many accusations were brought against the Athenians, both for what they had already done amiss, and for what they had decreed to do if they got the victory—that they would cut off the right hand of every man taken alive; and that, having captured two triremes, one of Corinth and one of Andros, they had thrown overboard the crews of them. And it was Philocles (one of the Athenian generals) who put to death these men. And many other things were said, and it was resolved to put to death as many of the prisoners as were Athenians, except Adeimantus (another of the generals), who in the assembly had alone opposed the vote for cutting off the hands. And he, indeed, was accused by some of having betrayed the fleet. And Lysander, having first questioned Philocles how that man ought to be treated who had thrown overboard the

Corinthians and Andrians, thus being the first to ill-use Greeks against national law, slew him." *

The number of those who thus perished, according to Plutarch,† was 3000—a wholesale destruction, in cold blood, from which the mind revolts. It admits of no palliation from the alleged pretext of the violation of international law; for it is hard to say which party commenced that system of military execution which forms the especial stigma of this portion of Greek history, and it is at least certain that in this stage of the contest neither belligerent could have a right to upbraid the other with aggravating the evils of war by unnecessary cruelty. The defeat of *Ægospotami* was conclusive. Conon, not daring to appear in Athens after the example of *Arginusæ*, and aware probably that further resistance was hopeless, bent his course to Cyprus, despatching the sacred ship *Paralus* to carry news of the defeat to Athens. It arrived by night, and the calamity being announced, "the wailing passed from *Peiræus* to the city, along the long walls, from one person to another; so that in this night no one slept, not only through grief for the dead, but far more because the living expected to meet the same treatment as they had given to the *Melians*—a colony of *Lacedæmon*, after having besieged and taken their city, and to the citizens of *Histiæa*, and *Scione*, and *Torone*, and *Ægina*, and to many other of the Greeks. And the next day a meeting was held at which it was resolved to block up all the harbours save one, and to put the walls into good condition, and set guards, and to prepare the city in all respects for a siege." ‡

These were the efforts of despair. Certain of success, since there was now no enemy to raise the siege, or to effect a diversion, the *Lacedæmonians* blockaded Athens by land and sea, and in a few months the spirit of the

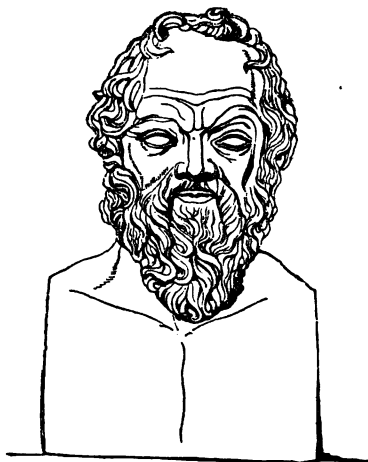
* *ἀνέσφαγεν* — slew him with his own hand, it should seem; a pleasant office for the commander-in-chief of a civilized nation. Xenoph. Hellen. ii. c. 1.

† Life of Lysander.

‡ Xen. Hellen. ii. c. 2.

people was so subdued by famine that they surrendered on humiliating terms, shortly after the expiration of the twenty-seventh year of the war. The walls of the city were destroyed; her ships of war, with the exception of twelve, were given up; it was covenanted to follow the guidance of Lacedæmon as subordinate allies; and, under the superintendence of the Lacedæmonian army the democracy, the pride of the Athenians, was exchanged for the short-lived form of government known in Greek history by the name of the Tyranny of the Thirty. This state of subjection did not last long, but the history of the circumstances under which it was shaken off belongs not to our present subject.

CHAPTER XVIII.



Bust of Socrates.

History and character of Socrates—Account of his death—Prosecution of John Huss and Jerome of Prague—Attempt to re-establish prelacy in Scotland—Brown—Guthrie—Reformation in England—Account of Rowland Taylor.

By strictly adhering to our intention of bringing down Greek history to the close of the Peloponnesian war, we should exclude from this volume an event which in all

ages has commanded an unusual sympathy—the execution of the philosopher Socrates on the false charge of blaspheming the recognised divinities, and corrupting the young citizens of his country. But as the life and actions of this remarkable man belong almost entirely to the period included in this volume, though his death did not occur until the year B.C. 399, five years after the capture of Athens, it seems proper to give some account of him here.

Socrates was the son of Sophroniscus, a sculptor, and himself gained a livelihood by working at his father's profession. But he devoted himself at an early age to the study of philosophy, and by the extreme simplicity and frugality of his habits was enabled to give up a very large portion of his time to that pursuit. In youth he diligently sought instruction, as far as his means permitted, from the best teachers of those branches of education which were in repute. How soon he gained notoriety as a public teacher himself, is not determined: but he must have been known before the 'Clouds' of Aristophanes, in which he is a leading character, was acted, B.C. 423. His conduct, however, was very different from that of the professed teachers for pay, who, at the time of which we speak, were numerous, and if successful, wealthy and influential. He gave no regular lectures in stated periods and places, he required no money from those who attended upon him, and indeed accepted no reward, either from those who heard him in public or those with whom he familiarly associated: private instruction, as a paid teacher, he refused to give, though his conversation was habitually directed to the objects of his public teaching. According to Xenophon,* he was always in public; in the morning he was found in frequented walks, or in the *gymnasia* or places of public exercise; he visited the agora, whenever it was likely to be fullest; he was seen in the evening, wherever he was likely to meet with the greatest number of persons. Instead of saying that he gave no regular lec-

* Memorabilia, book i. chap. 1, p. 10.

tures, it would be more correct to say that he never lectured at all: his usual course was to entrap the person upon whom he chose to exercise his dialectic powers, into a conversation, in its outset probably of the most commonplace and unalarming description; and then, by a series of skilfully contrived questions, to lead him, if a pretender to knowledge, to expose his presumption, and ignorance of what he professed to know; or he would take a person confessedly ignorant of the things to be discussed, and lead him step by step in a succession of questions, until he obtained out of the respondent's mouth the result at which he, the interrogator, wished to arrive.

It would be out of place to enter here upon the discussion of the abstruse question, how far and in what respects Socrates ought to be considered as the founder of a new school of philosophy.* Indeed to ascertain exactly what he did teach, is not now possible. Our knowledge of him is derived almost exclusively from two of his pupils, Plato and Xenophon; for all his instructions were oral; he wrote nothing. Now the memoirs (*Memorabilia*) of Xenophon exhibit "not the whole character of Socrates, but only that part of it which belonged to the sphere of the affections and of social life, and which bore upon the charges brought against him."† In respect of the more extensive and abstruse writings of Plato, it is to be said, that though we may be satisfied that his Socrates, as a whole, is a faithful portrait, yet it is hardly possible to determine exactly what belongs to the master, and what has been deduced from, and engrafted on the doctrines of the master by the scholar. For what Plato teaches, he teaches under the name of Socrates: he advances nothing

* Those readers who wish to inquire into it will find a learned and able paper on this subject by Schleiermacher, in the *Berlin Transactions*, translated in the *Philological Museum*, vol. ii. No. 6, "On the worth of Socrates as a philosopher."

† *Ibid.*, p. 544.

as his own, and on his own authority.* It is easy however, and sufficient for our present purpose, to state the grounds upon which Socrates has commanded the undying love and admiration, not of the learned only, but of all good men. There is a well-known passage of Cicero, which says, "that Socrates first drew down philosophy from heaven, and settled it in cities, and even introduced it into our homes, and made it inquire of life, and morals, and good and bad things."† It is to be understood from this, not that Socrates was the first moral teacher, but that whereas earlier philosophers had directed their attention chiefly to physical and theological questions of the most unfathomable kind, such as the nature, form, and essence of divinity, the nature of matter, the origin and constitution of the universe, &c. ; his instructions, on the contrary, were chiefly directed towards explaining the duties of life, and the principles on which the conduct of men in their social relations ought to be regulated. Nor is it impossible that Cicero's phrase may have been suggested, in some degree, by the novel style of language and illustration which Socrates used, of which we shall presently speak more at length. To physical studies,

* The earliest extant notice of this curious question is contained in the recently discovered Republic of Cicero, edited by Maii, lib. i. c. 10. As this treatise is not contained in the general editions of the philosopher we shall translate it:—"You have heard, Tubero, that after the death of Socrates, Plato, to acquire knowledge, travelled first to Egypt, then to Sicily and Italy, that he might learn the discoveries of Pythagoras; and that he had much intercourse with Archytas of Tarentum and Timæus the Locrian, and got possession of the Commentaries of Philolaus; and that, as the name of Pythagoras was then in much credit in those parts, he devoted himself to men of the Pythagorean school and to those studies. Therefore since he loved Socrates singly, and wished to refer everything to him, he blended the Socratic humour and subtlety of language with the obscurity of Pythagoras and that air of gravity given by so many kinds of learning."

† Tusc. Quæst. v. 4.

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Socrates, like his predecessors, had once been deeply addicted. Failing to arrive at any certain conclusions, he ceased to apply himself to such pursuits, and bent his own and his pupils' attention to questions more nearly connected with our social and moral duties; holding, probably, not that these abstruse inquiries were pernicious, or unworthy the attention of a philosopher, but that they ought to be postponed until the understanding was enlightened upon things bearing directly upon the duties and business of life.* Against those who doubted or denied the existence of a God, he maintained most ably that existence, and the incorporeal and immortal nature of the soul. In his disputes with the sophists and sceptics, he availed himself of a readiness and dexterity in argument superior to their own; and drawing them by an artful series of questions into inconsistencies and absurdities, exposed at once their arrogance and the falseness of their views. He stated and enforced a system of morality and religion purer and loftier than that of the Pythagoreans (the purest sect of antecedent philosophers); but unlike them, he was accessible to all, clear in all his statements, as far as possible, and ready to explain what was not understood. Ever earnest in recommending temperance, benevolence, piety, justice, and showing that man's happiness and dignity are determined by his mind and not his fortunes, by virtue and wisdom, not by wealth and rank, his own life was the best example of his precepts. His honesty as a public functionary, we have seen tested in the prosecution of the Athenian generals after the battle of Arginusæ: his private conduct was no less exemplary. Barefooted and poorly clad, he associated with the rich and gay as with the needy, in the same spirit of cheerful goodwill: his advice and instructions were given to all without fee or reward, for his spirit was rigidly independent, and if he possessed little, he wanted less.

* Schleiermacher, as above. The rest of this paragraph is taken, with some trivial alterations, from the History of Greece.

† For an account of this class of men, see vol. ii. pp. 153-157.

Such is a sketch of Socrates, as he is commonly drawn in history, and known to those who are not read in the Greek language. We have endeavoured not to exaggerate his merits; nor must it be attributed to a desire to detract from them, if we proceed to describe the social Socrates in a light which may surprise, and probably startle, many.* The portrait of the philosopher is, indeed, too generally known to permit them to ascribe to him that elevated cast of countenance which we associate in our minds with a character such as that just drawn: but they have most likely regarded him as sedate, dignified, and decorous in his manners and conduct. The picture, as we have it from his contemporaries, does not exactly accord with such a notion. A full conviction that what is good is in its nature unalterable, and therefore cannot consist in anything perishable, had led him to esteem what are commonly thought the advantages of life, such as health, riches, pleasure, power, unfit to be the chief objects of our desires, or motives of our actions; and he showed this in his own person by an extreme neglect of the usual luxuries, and even comforts of life. And he was fortunate, inasmuch as his self-denying principles were backed by a robust constitution; so that he was enabled, when serving as a soldier at the siege of Potidæa, to bear an unusual severity of cold with an indifference which his fellow-soldiers attributed to the desire of displaying his own hardihood at their expense. He went barefoot, even in winter; he used the same clothing, winter and summer; he eschewed the favourite Athenian luxury of unguents, and seldom indulged in that other favourite luxury, the bath.

The same eccentricity displayed itself in other parts

* Mr. Cumberland, in the 'Observer,' has made a violent attack on the moral character of Socrates. Mr. Mitchell has taken a more moderate and candid tone in the 'Preliminary Discourse' to his translation of Aristophanes. We have to acknowledge ourselves indebted to his extensive acquaintance with the Socratic writings, for references to several valuable and characteristic passages.

of his conduct. While serving in the camp before Potidea, he is said to have stood motionless for a day, from sunrise to sunrise, engaged in meditation. The peculiarity of his personal appearance * was well qualified to

* This is described by Xenophon in his Banquet, in a passage which we must regard as his genuine recollection of a similar picaresque on the part of Socrates. Had it been found in Plato, this might have been doubtful; but it is not Xenophon's habit to introduce his master in this ludicrous manner. At a drinking party in the house of Callias, Socrates is introduced contesting the point of beauty with Critobulus. To prove his own superiority, he asks, "whether beauty resides in man only, or in other things?"

Critobulus. I think, by Jupiter, that it exists in a horse also, and an ox, and many inanimate things: as, for instance, I know of a handsome shield, or sword, or spear.

Socrates. And how is it possible that these things, being all unlike each other, should all be handsome?

Critob. If things are well fitted for the purposes for which we have them, or are well constituted by nature for useful ends, even these things are handsome.^a

Socr. Do you know, then, for what you want eyes?

Critob. Plainly, to see.

Socr. On this ground, then, my eyes would be handsomer than yours.

Critob. How so?

Socr. Because yours see straight forward only; but mine, which project, can see to the side also.

Critob. You say, then, that a crab is the best eyed of animals?

^a There is a sort of ambiguity in the Greek word *καλός*, which is applicable to any sort of excellence, whether beauty of form or aptness to a purpose; so that neither handsome, nor any English single word which occurs to us, exactly expresses its whole meaning. Familiarly, indeed, we do use the term beautiful much in the same way; and speak of a beautiful woman, and a beautiful cricket-bat, without meaning that there is any more similarity between them, either of form or purpose, than Critobulus, when he applies the term *καλός* equally to a man, an ox, or a shield.

attract notice, and set off his singular habits : and some of his habits seem better suited to his personal appearance than to his real character ; for in his conversation (as it is reported by Plato), he assumed a licence which has given birth to imputations against him, at variance with the parity of morals which he inculcated, and which the concurrent testimony of his followers and biographers asserts that he practised. His favourite associates were the young, among whom he was most likely to gain converts to his own opinions, and accordingly he mixed without scruple in their festivities, and even in their intemperance ; though wine was never seen to affect him, and that not from abstinence in his potations. The banquet of Plato, in which Socrates, Alcibiades, Aristophanes, and others are the speakers, ends with a description of the festivities, being broken up late at night, by the irruption of a party of drunken revellers, "after which things were no longer carried on regularly, but

Socr. By all means : since it has eyes the best constituted for that which is the purpose of eyes.

Critob. Granted. But of our noses, which is the handsomest, mine or yours ?

Socr. I indeed think mine the handsomest, if the gods, in truth, made noses for us to smell with : for your nostrils point downwards to the ground, while mine are spread open, so as to collect smells from all quarters.

Critob. But how can a pug nose be handsomer than a straight one ?

Socr. Because it constitutes no barrier, but lets the eyes look straight where they choose ; but a high nose, as if out of insolence, sets a wall between the eyes.

Critob. For the mouth, I give up : for if mouths were made to bite with, you can take a much bigger mouthful than I.

Socr. And do you consider it no proof that I am handsomer than you that the Naiads, who are goddesses, have for children Sileni, who are more like me than you ?

Critob. I have nothing to say in reply : but let the votes be taken, that I may know as soon as possible what penalty I incur.

Verdict for Critobulus.

everybody was compelled to drink a great quantity of wine. On this (said Aristodemus, the relater) several of the party went away, but he himself fell asleep, and slept very abundantly, for the nights were then long. But on awaking towards daybreak, the cocks then crowing, he saw that the other guests were either gone or asleep, and that Agathon, Socrates, and Aristophanes were the only persons awake, and were drinking to the right hand out of a great bowl. Now Socrates was lecturing them: and the rest of his discourse, Aristodemus said he did not remember, for being asleep, he had not been present at the beginning. But the sum of it was, that Socrates compelled them to confess that it was the province of the same man to know how to compose comedy and tragedy, and that he who was by art a tragic poet was a comic poet also. And having been forced to assent to these things, and that without very clearly understanding them, Aristodemus said they fell asleep; and first Aristophanes went to sleep, and then, as the day broke, Agathon. And Socrates, having sent them to sleep, got up and departed; and going to the Lyceum, washed himself, as at other times, and spent the whole day there, and so in the evening went home to rest.”*

This is not exactly the sort of scene in which the great teacher of moral philosophy would be expected to figure; but according to the best notions we can form it is a characteristic one, whether drawn literally from the life, or freely coloured by Plato, who, it may be safely concluded, would not have invented such manners for a master whom he loved and venerated. This freedom of speech and life, combined with his personal peculiarities and uncouth and eccentric habits, led Alcibiades to compare him to the Sileni, in the workshops of statuaries, rude figures which, on being opened, showed that they contained inside precious images of the gods.† Such a man lay open to a large share of ridicule, and in the earlier part of his vocation as a public instructor, a plentiful share of ridicule was bestowed on him by Aristo-

* Convivium: end.

† Convivium, § xxxix., part ii., vol. ii., p. 452, ed. Bekker.

phanes in his celebrated comedy of the Clouds. At the same time he was not a person to be rashly attacked; and those who were most hostile to him, and to whom he was most hostile, especially the sophists, were for the most part roughly handled, when they ventured to engage with him in a contest of wits. Few of his followers seem to have been really attached to him; but those, to their honour and his, remained faithful and attached both to his person and memory in no common degree. But many frequented his society for a time with eagerness, to enjoy his subtlety of discourse, to be amused by the eminent discomfiture which he usually inflicted on those who ventured publicly to oppose him, and to profit by the novel style of reasoning introduced by him, which, if a powerful instrument of truth when used honestly, was not less adapted, when used skilfully and unscrupulously, to throw all the notions of a common-place understanding into inextricable confusion. It was probably the latter motive which induced many men eminent in after-life to rank themselves, as we are told, among his pupils; especially three who are recorded to have frequented his society, Aleibiades, Theramenes, and Critias; for we can hardly suppose, from their known characters, that these men, none of them of fair political fame, however attracted by the talents, and studious to derive intellectual benefit from the society of Socrates, were in any degree influenced by the true philosophy which, under this singular coat of eccentricity, he sought to recommend. And as Socrates does not seem to have been beloved in *general*, even by those who sought his company, so among the citizens at large he obtained none of that gratitude which a life devoted without reward to the public service should seem likely to inspire, except that those who volunteer their services notoriously get small thanks for their pains; especially when those services are directed to enlighten ignorance, or remove prejudice. Nor were his habits calculated to conciliate favour. His self-denial and frugality of life seemed like a tacit reproach to the idle and luxurious, numerous everywhere, and more than commonly numerous at Athens. Again,

the dedication of his life to gratuitous teaching, as he conducted it, was one of the most unpopular things about him. If he had given lectures at stated periods to those who chose to hear him, he might have been endured, but his life seems to have been a never-ending lecture, which is wearisome to all people. Even at the banquet he would interrupt the song and dance, the favourite amusements of the Athenians,* in favour of the argumentative conversations which he loved above all things: and whether at the banquet or elsewhere, stranger or acquaintance, every person who came across him was liable to be made subject to his moral dissecting knife, in a way which few would very patiently submit to. "You seem to me, O Lysimachus," says Nicias, in Plato's *Laches*, "not to be aware that whosoever may be closely connected with Socrates in argument, as if by birth, and may be attracted to him in disputation, is compelled, though the conversation may begin concerning something quite different, not to leave off, being led round and round by him in discourse, before he falls into giving an account of himself, both how he now lives, and how he has lived in past time; and that when he is thus engaged, Socrates will not let him go before he has scrutinized all these things well and fairly. Now I am used to him, and know that I must go through all this at his hands; and that I shall do so on this occasion. For I rejoice, O Lysimachus, in the company of this man, and think it no bad thing to be reminded of what we have done, or are doing, amiss."†

Not less remarkable than his appearance, and well suited to it, was the language in which these familiar in-

* Xen. *Conviv.*, c. 3. So in the *Protagoras* of Plato, part i., chap. 92, vol. ii., p. 221, ed., Bekker. "Such meetings as these, when they occupy men such as most of us here profess to be, require no stranger's voice, and no poets, whom it is impossible to question about the meaning of what they relate . . . but such men seek the company of each other for their own sakes, giving and making trial of each other in their conversation."

† Plat. *Laches*, § 14, part i., vol. i., p. 270, ed., Bekker.

quiries of Socrates were usually clothed. Constant intercourse with all classes, high and low, had given him a store of familiar illustrations, often more forcible than elegant, derived from the habits and experience of artificers, whose peculiar terms of art he loved to introduce in a style which must have contrasted oddly with the pompous language of the sophists. Alcibiades thus characterizes his style in the banquet of Plato: "A man so unlike all others as Socrates, both for himself and for his manner of conversation, one could hardly find by inquiry, either of those now living nor of old times; unless one were to liken him, as I have said, to no man indeed, but to the Silenuses and Satyrs, both him and his speech. And, in truth, I omitted this in what I said before, that his speech is very like to the figures of Silenus when opened. For if a person should wish to hear the speeches of Socrates, they would appear at first quite ridiculous; in such terms and words are they clothed outwardly, as if it were in the hide of a saucy satyr. For he talks of asses and their burdens, and of braziers, and leather-cutters, and tanners, and always seems to say the same things through the same medium; so that an unwise or unexperienced man would laugh at his words. But he who sees them open, and gets at their inside, will find, first, that they alone, of all discourses, have meaning within them; then that they are most divine, and contain most images of virtue in themselves; and reach to the greatest extent, or rather to everything, which he who wishes to be good and honourable ought to regard."* Now the bulk of those who came into contact with Socrates were unwise or inexperienced; therefore they laughed at him, as Alcibiades said they would; but it is quite as probable that a large portion, especially of those who were entrapped into the sort of cross-examination above described, became angry, or, to use a familiar expression, were bored. We may fairly conjecture that Socrates had the reputation of being the greatest bore of his day;† and this in the laughter-loving town of Athens,

* Convivium, § 44, part ii., vol. ii., p. 465, ed., Bekker.

† It would seem to be, in reference to this sort of feeling,

would have been quite enough to neutralize all notion of gratitude for his persevering attempts to teach his countrymen that they knew little or nothing, instead of everything, as they flattered themselves, or at least everything worth knowing.

Against this man, after he had continued in this singular mode of life at least twenty-four years (for the date of the *Clouds* informs us that he had obtained some notoriety before the year B.C. 423, in which that comedy was acted), a criminal accusation was brought, B.C. 399, to the following effect :—"Socrates does amiss, not recognizing the gods which the state recognizes, and introducing other new divine natures, and he does amiss in that he corrupts the young." The originator of the charge was an obscure person named Melitus, (*Schleiermacher* reads *Meletus*,) a poet, and a bad one; but he was joined by, Lycon, an orator,* and Anytus, a man of

that Plato puts these words into the mouth of Socrates, after sentence passed on him near the end of the *Apology* : "For now you have done this, thinking that you should be liberated from the necessity of giving an account of your life;" a necessity which, to take Socrates' own account of his conduct, they may have been very glad to be liberated from. "For if you should put me to death, you will not easily find such another (though the comparison is ridiculous) whom Divinity has united to this city as to a generous and great horse; but sluggish through his magnitude, and requiring to be excited by some fly. In like manner, Divinity appears to have united me, being somewhat like this (*i. e.*, the fly) to the city, that I might not cease exciting, persuading, and reproving each of you, and everywhere settling on you all day long."—*Apol. ed.*, Bekk., part i., vol ii., chap. 18, p. 118. Nobody, however, ever heard that the horse was grateful to the fly. Again, "As to what I before observed, that there is great enmity towards me amongst the vulgar, you may be well assured that it is true. And this it is which will condemn me, if I should be condemned—the hatred of the multitude, and not Melitus or Anytus."—Part i., vol. ii., chap. 16, p. 112, ed., Bekk.

* Solon appointed a set of officers, ten in number, who were called *phropes*, speakers, to argue and explain to the

wealth and consideration in Athens. The cause of that enmity which led to this prosecution is nowhere clearly explained. Mr. Mitford and Mr. Mitchell, who both entertain a sort of horror for democracy, attribute his condemnation to his known dislike of that form of government. With this statement, as a matter of belief, we have no ground of quarrel; if stated as a matter of fact, we know of no direct authority to support it.* In

people the merits of public questions, for a certain fee. Their qualifications were to be made the subject of a very close inquiry, according to his laws. Whether in later times the appellation was confined to these recognized speakers, or whether all who were ready to speak and plead causes, as Lysias, Isocrates, &c., were so called, the author has not been able to ascertain to his satisfaction; but he believes the latter to be the case, which is not incompatible with the term still retaining its special meaning, as the title of an officer. Demosthenes calls himself a *ρήτωρ* (De Cor. 301). In later times they acquired much more importance. Demosthenes was a sort of prime minister. In his time, he says, the orators and generals ran in couples; one to plan and defend, the other to perform (*ρήτωρ ἡγεμὼν, καὶ στρατηγὸς ὑπὸ τοῦτω*, De Rep. Ord., 173). In earlier times, on the contrary, all the leaders in Athens were men of action, Themistocles, Cimon, Pericles, &c., down to Nicias and Alcibiades, though most of them cultivated eloquence at the same time. Even Cleon thought it necessary to pretend to military renown.

* The passage of Ælian (iii., 17), quoted both by Mitford and Mitchell, as giving the true solution of the cause of Socrates' death, contains no solution at all of that problem: it merely tells us, what we knew on better authority, that Socrates did not like democracy. Xenophon, Mem. i., c. 2, does more to support this opinion; for he states distinctly that the avowed dislike of Socrates to the practice of choosing magistrates by lot, the bad character of his pupils Alcibiades and Critias, and his alleged perversion of passages in the poets, to teach his pupils "to be evil-doers and supporters of tyrannies," were topics insisted on by his accusers in the speech for the prosecution. Nor is it improbable that such topics had their weight with many in the multitude of judges who composed the court, a body too numerous to discriminate and weigh evidence.

the apology of Plato, Socrates says, that his three accusers attacked him, "Melitus being my enemy on account of the poets, but Anytus on account of the artificers and politicians, and Lycon on account of the orators."* This passage would rather suggest the notion of private enmity, which is in some degree confirmed by another passage in the apology of Xenophon, where Socrates refers the dislike of Anytus, to a comment made on his style of bringing up his son.† The causes of hatred ascribed to Melitus and Lycon must be explained.

* Apol., c. x., part i., vol. ii., p. 103, ed., Bekker.

† "Seeing Anytus pass by, he said, 'In truth this man is self-important, as if he would have done some great and noble action, in having procured my death, because I said that it was not expedient that he should educate his son about hides, seeing that he himself was held in the highest esteem by the commonwealth.'—Apol. Xen., § 29. In the Menon of Plato, Anytus is represented as taking great offence with Socrates, for showing that neither Aristides nor Pericles, nor other great statesmen, had been able to educate their sons so as to impart to them their own great abilities (he omits to mention Miltiades, who had a son more eminent than himself, Cimon): a ground of offence which seems odd enough, unless we suppose Anytus to have felt that Socrates was talking at him all the time. Anytus concludes his share in the dialogue with a caution to the philosopher against his freedom of speech, and a hint that in all places it is readier to do harm than good to a man, and of all places, most especially in Athens. 'No wonder,' Socrates replies, 'that Anytus is angry, since he thinks that I am abusing men, of whom he esteems himself to be one' (Ed., Bekker, part ii., vol. i., p. 378, § 34). These men are the πολιτικοὶ (see § 42;) so that Anytus was both πολιτικός, and (as being a leather-dealer) δημιουργός; the two terms used in the passage quoted from the Apology, and in both capacities it would seem that Socrates had offended him. One of the commentators on Plato (Forster, Apol. as above) tells us that the tradesmen of Athens thought that Socrates corrupted the youth of Athens, because he disapproved of educating young men, as Anytus is said to have brought up his son solely to the lucrative crafts of their fathers, and because he led them into the idle habit of thinking and talking. It may be observed that the

—the one by Socrates' avowed contempt for the fictions of poets; the other to his equally avowed abhorrence of that system of instruction practised by the sophists; of which one, and that the most popular branch, was the teaching oratory as an art, by which any person could be enabled to speak on any subject, however ignorant concerning the real merits of it. This desire to remove Socrates existing, whatever its origin, it could not be gratified without finding some plausible ground to go upon. Nothing could be objected to his actions; as a soldier he had distinguished himself for bravery; as a public officer he had shown inflexible integrity, when the infamous vote was passed for putting to death the generals who won the battle of Arginusæ;* and on another occasion, as a citizen, he had refused, when ordered to apprehend Leon of Salamis,† at the hazard of life, to perform an act contrary to the laws. The real or alleged character of his philosophy and teaching then was the only handle against him. Of this, we have already said enough in the beginning of this chapter to show that it was difficult to find just ground of complaint against it. But to invent false charges is never difficult; and those which came readiest to hand were the same, to a certain extent, as Aristophanes, in ignorance or wantonness, had long before brought against him. "What," he says in the *Apology*, "do my accusers say? It is this, 'Socrates acts wickedly, and with criminal curiosity investigates things under the earth, and in the heavens. He also makes the worse to be the better argument, and he teaches these things to others.' Such is the accusation; for things of this kind you also have yourselves seen in

character of Anytus did not stand quite clear; since, according to Diodorus, having been sent with a fleet to relieve Pylos, and having failed to do so, as he alleged, from the badness of the weather, he was accused of treachery, "and, being in great danger, bought himself off, being the first of the Athenians, as it appears, who ever bribed a court of justice" (Diod., xiii. 64).

* See p. 203, ante.

† Mitford, chap. xxxi. 2.

the comedy of Aristophanes: for there one Socrates is carried about, who affirms that he walks upon the air, and idly asserts many other trifles of this nature; of which things however I neither know much nor little."*. If we are to take this literally, it involves the charge of not believing in any gods at all, for such is the character of Socrates as given in the *Clouds*; a charge the falsity of which is amply proved both by Xenophon and Plato in their respective apologies. The charge of introducing new deities refers to the *dæmon*, or divine nature, by which Socrates professed to be guided in his conduct from a child, and which manifested itself by an internal voice, which never suggested anything, but very frequently warned him from that which he was about to do. False, however, as the charge against him was in all respects, Socrates appears to have felt that his condemnation was certain, and to have taken no pains either to avert it or to escape. The orator Lysias is said to have composed a laboured speech which he offered to the philosopher to be used as his defence; but he declined it. His trial came on before the court of *Heliea*, the most numerous tribunal in Athens, in which a body of judges sat, fluctuating in number, but usually consisting of several hundreds, chosen by lot from among the body of the citizens. It was not therefore to a bench of judges such as we are used to see them, bred to the law, and presumed at least to be dispassionate and unprejudiced, but to a popular assembly, that he had to plead. Nevertheless, he abstained studiously from every means of working on the passions, even to the usual method of supplication and moving pity by the introduction of his weeping family. Such appeals he thought unbecoming his own character, or the gravity of a court of justice, in which the question of the guilt or innocence of a prisoner ought alone to be regarded. Judgment, as he expected, was pronounced against him, though only by a majority of three. By the Athenian law, the guilt of an accused person being affirmed by the judges, a second question arose concern-

* Plat. *Apol.*, § 3; part i., vol. ii. p. 93, ed. Bekker.

ing the amount of his punishment. The accuser, in his charge, stated the penalty which he proposed to inflict; the prisoner had the privilege of speaking in mitigation of judgment, and naming that which he considered adequate to the offence. Socrates, at this stage of his trial, still preserved the same high tone.* If, he said, I am to estimate my own punishment, it must be according to my merits; and as these are great, I deserve that reward which is suited to a poor man who has been your benefactor, namely, a public maintenance in the Prytaneum.† Death, he said, he did not fear, not knowing whether it were a change for the better or the worse. Imprisonment and exile he esteemed worse than death, and being persuaded of his own innocence, he would never be party to a sentence of evil on himself. To a fine, if he had money to pay it, he had no objection, since the loss of the money would leave him no worse off than before; and he was able to pay a *mina* of silver (about 4*l.* English), he would assess his punishment at that sum: or rather, at thirty minæ, as Plato and three other of his disciples expressed a wish to become his sureties to that amount.

This was not a line of conduct likely to excite pity, and sentence of death was passed by a larger majority than before. He again addressed a short speech to his judges, in which he tells them, that for the sake of cutting off a little from his life, already verging on the grave, they had incurred and brought on the city a lasting reproach, and that he might have escaped, if he would have condescended to use supplications and lamentations. Of his mode of defence, however, he repented not, seeing that

* The *Apology* of Plato, though commonly printed without any division, consists of three parts: Socrates' defence of himself; his second speech, as to the amount of punishment, which begins at § 25 (part i., vol. ii., p. 128, ed. Bekker); and his address to the judges after sentence of death was passed, which begins at § 29 (part i., vol. ii., p. 133).

† This public maintenance (*συνεσις ἐν πρυτανείῳ*) was esteemed one of the highest honours that the state could confer.

he had rather die, having so spoken, than live by the use of unworthy methods; and that to escape death was far less difficult than to avoid baseness. He concluded by an address to the judges, who had voted for his acquittal, stating the grounds of his hopes that death would be a change for the better; the first of which is, that the dæmon had never opposed or checked his intended line of conduct during the whole of these proceedings, nor in his speeches had it ever stopped him from saying anything that he meant to say, as it was used often to do in conversation: from which he inferred, that his invisible guide had approved of all that he did, and that therefore a good thing was about to happen to him. Death, he said, was either insensibility, or a migration of the soul: in the former case, as compared with life, he esteemed it a change for the better; in the latter, if the general belief was true, what greater good could there be than to meet and enjoy the society of the great men of antiquity? Urging, therefore, these just judges to look confidently towards death, and to believe that to a good man, dead or alive, no real harm can happen; he concludes, "It is time that we should depart, I to die, you to live; but which of us to the better thing, is known to the Divinity alone."

Death usually followed close upon condemnation: but the death of Socrates was delayed by an Athenian usage of great antiquity, said to have been instituted in commemoration of the deliverance of Attica by Theseus from the tyranny of Minos. Every year the sacred ship in which Theseus had sailed to Crete, was despatched with offerings to the sacred island of Delos; and in the interim between its departure and return no criminals were ever put to death. Socrates was condemned the evening before its departure, and consequently he was respited until its return—a period of thirty days. During this time his friends had access to him; and the dialogues of Plato, entitled *Criton* and *Phædon*, purport to be the substance of conversations held by him towards the close of this time. If he had been willing to escape, the gaoler was bribed and the means of escape prepared; but this was a

breach of the laws which he refused to countenance, and he still thought, as he had said in his speech, exile to be worse than death. On the last day of his life, when his friends were admitted at sunrise, they found him with his wife and one child. These were soon dismissed, lest their lamentations should disturb his last interview with his friends and pupils: and he commenced a conversation which speedily turned on the immortality of the soul, the arguments for which, as they could best be developed by one of the acutest of human intellects, without the assistance of revelation, are summed up in that celebrated dialogue, the *Phædon*, which professes to relate all the events of this last day of the philosopher's life. It concludes as follows:—

“ When he had thus spoken, ‘ Be it so, Socrates,’ said Criton; ‘ but what orders do you leave to these who are present, or to myself, either respecting your children, or anything else, in the execution of which we should most gratify you?’ ‘ What I always do say, Criton (he replied), nothing new: that if you pay due attention to yourselves, do what you will, you will always do what is acceptable to myself, to my family, and to your own-selves, though you should not now promise me anything. But if you neglect yourselves, and are unwilling to live following the track, as it were, of what I have said both now and heretofore, you will do nothing the more, though you should now promise many things, and that with earnestness.’ ‘ We shall take care therefore,’ said Criton, ‘ so to act. But how would you be buried?’ ‘ Just as you please (said he), if you can but catch me, and I do not elude your pursuit.’ And at the same time gently laughing, and addressing himself to us, ‘ I cannot persuade Criton,’ he said, ‘ my friends, that I am that Socrates who now disputes with you, and methodizes every part of the discourse; but he thinks that I am he whom he will shortly behold dead, and asks how I ought to be buried. But all that long discourse which some time since I addressed to you, in which I asserted that after I had drunk the poison I should no longer remain with you, but should depart to certain felicities of the blessed, this I seem to have de-

clared to him in vain, though it was undertaken to console both you and myself. Be surety, therefore, for me to Criton, to the reverse of that, for which he became surety for me to the judges; for he was my bail that I should remain; but be you my bail that I shall not remain when I die, but shall depart hence, that Criton may bear it the more easily, and may not be afflicted when he sees my body burnt or buried, as if I were suffering some dreadful misfortune; and that he may not say at my interment, that Socrates is laid out, or carried out, or is buried. For be well assured of this, my friend Criton, that when we speak amiss, we are not only blameable as to our expressions, but likewise do some evil to our souls. But it is fit to be of good heart, and to say that my body will be buried, and to bury it in such manner as may be most pleasing to yourself; and as you may esteem it most agreeable to our laws.' "

When he had thus spoken, he arose, and went into another room, that he might wash himself, and Criton followed him: but he ordered us to wait for him. We waited therefore accordingly; discoursing over; and reviewing among ourselves what had been said; and sometimes speaking about his death, how great a calamity it would be to us; and sincerely thinking that we, like those who are deprived of their fathers, should pass the rest of our life in the condition of orphans. But when he had washed himself, his sons were brought to him (for he had two little ones, and one older), and the women belonging to his family likewise came in to him: but when he had spoken to them before Criton, and had left them such injunctions as he thought proper; he ordered the boys and women to depart, and he himself returned to us. And it was now near the setting of the sun; for he had been away in the inner room for a long time. But when he came in from bathing he sat down, and did not speak much afterwards: for then the servant of the Eleven* came in, and standing near him, "I do

* Athenian magistrates, who had the charge of executing criminals.

not perceive that in you, Socrates," said he, "which I have taken notice of in others; I mean that they are angry with me, and curse me, when, being compelled by the magistrates, I announce to them that they must drink the poison. But, on the contrary, I have found you to the present time to be the most generous, mild, and best of all the men that ever came into this place; and therefore I am well convinced that you are not angry with me, but with the authors of your present condition, for you know who they are. Now, therefore (for you know what I came to tell you), farewell; and endeavour to bear this necessity as easily as possible." And at the same time, bursting into tears, and turning himself away, he departed. But Socrates, looking after him, said, "And thou, too, farewell; and we shall take care to act as you advise." And at the same time, turning to us, "How courteous," he said, "is the behaviour of that man! During the whole time of my abode here, he has visited me, and often conversed with me, and proved himself to be the best of men; and now how generously he weeps on my account! But let us obey him, Criton, and let some one bring the poison, if it is bruised; and, if not, let the man whose business it is, bruise it." "But, Socrates," said Criton, "I think that the sun still hangs over the mountains, and is not set yet. And at the same time I have known others who have drunk the poison very late, after it was announced to them; who have supped and drunk abundantly. Therefore, do not be in such haste, for there is yet time enough." Socrates replied, "Such men, Criton, act fitly in the manner which you have described, for they think to derive some advantage by so doing; and I also with propriety shall not act in this manner. For I do not think I shall gain anything by drinking it later, except becoming ridiculous to myself through desiring to live, and being sparing of life, when nothing of it any longer remains. Go, therefore," said he, "be persuaded, and comply with my request."

Then Criton hearing this, gave a sign to the boy that stood near him; and the boy departing, and having stayed

for some time, came back with the person that was to administer the poison, who brought it pounded in a cup. And Socrates, looking at the man, said, "Well, my friend (for you are knowing in these matters), what is to be done?" "Nothing (he said) but, after you have drunk it, to walk about, until a heaviness takes place in your legs, and then to lie down: this is the manner in which you have to act." And at the same time he extended the cup to Socrates. And Socrates taking it—and indeed, Echecrates—with great cheerfulness, neither trembling, nor suffering any change for the worse in his colour or countenance, but as he was used to do, looking up sternly* at the man. "What say you," he said, "as to making a libation from this potion? may I do it or not?" "We only bruise as much, Socrates," he said, "as we think sufficient for the purpose." "I understand you," he said; "but it is both lawful and proper to pray to the gods that my departure from hence thither may be prosperous: which I entreat them to grant may be the case." And so saying, he stopped, and drank the poison very readily and pleasantly. And thus far indeed the greater part of us were tolerably well able to refrain from weeping: but when we saw him drinking, and that he had drunk it, we could no longer restrain our tears. And from me indeed, in spite of my efforts, they flowed, and not drop by drop;† so that wrapping myself in my mantle, I bewailed myself, not indeed for his misfortune, but for my own, considering what a companion I should be deprived of. But Criton, who was not able to restrain his tears, was compelled to rise before me. And Apollodorus, who during the whole time prior to this had not ceased from weeping, then wept aloud with great bitterness, so that he infected all who were present except Socrates. But Socrates, upon seeing this, exclaimed, "What are you doing, you strange men! In truth, I principally sent away the women lest they should

* ταυρηδὲν τροβέψας, looking up like a bull.

† That is, profusely.

produce a disturbance of this kind ; for I have heard that it is proper to die among well-omened sounds.* Be quiet, therefore, and maintain your fortitude." And when we heard this, we were ashamed, and restrained our tears. But he, when he found during his walking about that his legs became heavy, and had told us so, laid himself down on his back. For the man had told him to do so. And at the same time he who gave him the poison, touching him at intervals, examined his feet and legs. And then pressing very hard on his foot, he asked him if he felt it. But Socrates answered that he did not. And after this he pressed his thighs, and thus, going upwards, he showed us that he was cold and stiff. And Socrates also touched himself, and said that when the poison reached his heart he should then depart. But now the lower part of his body was almost cold ; when uncovering himself (for he was covered), he said (and these were his last words), " Criton, we owe a cock to *Æsculapius*. Discharge this debt therefore for me, and do not neglect it." " It shall be done," said Criton ; " but consider whether you have any other commands." To this inquiry of Criton he made no reply ; but shortly after moved himself, and the man uncovered him. And Socrates fixed his eyes ; which, when Criton perceived, he closed his mouth and eyes. " This, Echecrates, was the end of our companion ; a man, as it appears to me, the best of those whom we were acquainted with at that time, and besides this, the most prudent and just." †

Such is the narration which Cicero professed himself unable to read without tears. Its celebrity and beauty will, we hope, be received as a sufficient excuse for

* The Greeks thought it of much consequence that any momentous business should be undertaken under favourable omens. Sounds of lamentation were ill-omened ; even the direct mention of death was avoided when a periphrasis would serve. The tragic poets abound in instances of this sort of *euphemism*.

† Taylor's translation of Plato. Some slight alterations have been made where the translator seemed to have gone unnecessarily far from the language of the original.



giving this version of a passage which, as a whole, is little known in an English dress ; for we must confess, that while history, both ancient and modern, abounds in events analogous in the nature of their interest to the death of Socrates, we find none which, strictly speaking, can be regarded as parallels to it. This arises in part from our hardly knowing whether to refer his prosecution and condemnation to private hatred ; or to the enmity of the sophists, and the powerful party which supported them ; or to the genuine zeal of religious bigotry ; or to a political fear that the doctrines taught by Socrates were calculated to breed up a set of men in too little respect for the democracy. All these causes have been assigned ; and whatever the motive which influenced his accusers, all may have had their influence on the judges

who condemned him, as well as that unworthy pride which is expressly mentioned by Xenophon* as having prevented the acquittal of his master. Whether therefore we seek our instances among civil or religious persecutions, we shall scarcely find anything strictly analogous to the death of Socrates; and as we have said, it is here introduced more for the beauty of the narrative than for the sake of comparison. To that beauty, and to the talents of the historian, Socrates and his resignation owe no small share of their extraordinary celebrity. It is well remarked by Mitford, that though "the magnanimity of Socrates surely deserves admiration, yet it is not that in which he has most outshone other men. The circumstances of Lord Russell's fate were far more trying. Socrates, as we may reasonably suppose, would have borne Lord Russell's trial: but with Bishop Burnet for his eulogist, instead of Plato and Xenophon, he would not have had his present splendid fame."[†]

The power of meeting an inevitable death with firmness and composure, is so far from being uncommon, that our interest in examples of it might be supposed to be deadened by their frequent occurrence. It is to be found, the outward show of it at least, in all stations, from the martyr for religion or patriotism, down to the humble and profligate sufferer who forfeits his life as a convicted felon. The fancied gaiety of Captain Macheath is as true to nature as the cheerfulness of Sir Thomas More; and the iron resolution of the murderer Thurtell enabled him to face death as composedly as Charles I. or

* "Socrates, though it was the common practice for criminals at the bar to address the passions, and to flatter and entreat their judges, and by such means often to obtain acquittals, would, on no account, do any of those things which, contrary to law, were continually done in the courts; but though he might readily have gained his acquittal from his judges if he had done such things even in a moderate degree, chose rather to die, abiding by the laws, than to live by transgressing them."—(Xen. Mem., c. iv., p. 4.

† *Mist. of Greece*, chap. xxii., § 3.

Algernon Sidney. Still we do read with eagerness and admiration of More's cheerful jocularly on the scaffold, of the holy resignation of Latimer, and the high-souled, yet tender and womanly deportment of Lady Jane Grey. The subject seems to possess an interest not easily exhausted. Historians therefore have seldom thought the last hours of great men unworthy of notice: and the constancy and dying professions of those who have laid down their lives for their political or religious opinions, have always been eagerly treasured up by friends and followers, as evidences both of the sincerity and truth of their belief. Yet such evidence is doubtful even in respect of the former, and null in respect of the latter; for there never perhaps was a cause important enough to challenge persecution, which did not find persons ready to suffer martyrdom for its sake.

In selecting the examples which occupy the rest of this chapter, it has been endeavoured to take such as, relating to important and spirit-stirring seasons, are yet likely not to be familiar in their details to all our readers. We do not profess that they will bear a close comparison with the prosecution of Socrates; on the contrary, we may here again express our belief that nothing can be found analogous either to the character or the history of that extraordinary man. Nor shall we attempt to make out a resemblance where no real one exists. The design of this work will be sufficiently fulfilled, if the following passages of history shall appear interesting: the lessons which they convey cannot be otherwise than profitable. The first and third refer to persecutions purely religious in their character; the second refers to what, under the appearance of a religious persecution, was in fact quite as much a plot against civil liberty.

The first embraces a short sketch of the history and death of two among the most eminent of the early Reformers, John Huss, and Jerome of Prague. John Huss, or rather John of Hussinetz (for he derived his name, according to a common usage of that time, from the place of his birth), was a Bohemian priest, educated at the University of Prague. His talents, and the simpli-

city and severity of his life, raised him through subordinate stations to the high office of Rector of the University. By some means, the nature of which is not quite clear, the opinions and works of our venerable Wiclif, the first translator of the Bible into the English tongue, were conveyed into Bohemia towards the close of the fourteenth century. They struck deep root in that soil: a circumstance to be attributed in no small degree to the effect produced by Wiclif's character and doctrines upon the mind of Huss; who conceived so deep a veneration for his preceptor, that in his sermons to the people in the chapel of Bethlehem (a chapel endowed by a pious citizen of Prague, to enable two preachers to address the lower orders in the Bohemian tongue), he is said often to have addressed his earnest vows to Heaven, that "whensoever he should be removed from this life, he might be admitted to the same regions where the soul of Wiclif resided; since he doubted not that he was a good and holy man, and worthy of a habitation in heaven."* Already eminent for his philosophical attainments, Huss had obtained another kind of celebrity, so early as the year 1405, by these sermons, in which he inveighed powerfully against the extortions and corruptions by which the papal hierarchy had disfigured the purity of Christian faith. He continued to preach, unchecked, till the year 1409, when the Archbishop of Prague commenced open war on the new doctrines, by ordering all members of the university who possessed Wiclif's writings to bring them in, that those which were found to be heretical might be publicly burnt. Two hundred volumes are said to have been thus destroyed. Huss, and other members of the university, appealed to the Pope; but, as might have been expected, their cause took an unfavourable turn, and the Archbishop was empowered to suppress the doctrines of Wiclif within his diocese. Huss, however, with his friend, pupil, and fellow-sufferer, Jerome of Prague, master of theology in the university, continued

* Hist. of Church, p. 587.

to preach : and the people followed them, in spite of the combination and determined opposition of the clergy in general. Huss was in consequence summoned to appear at Rome. He refused to place himself in the power of the Pope, but sent three deputies to plead his cause. The deputies were insulted and maltreated, and he himself was declared guilty of contumacy, and excommunicated. Against this censure he published a formal protest, in which, after reciting authorities to justify the step which he was taking, narrating his excommunication, and explaining the injustice and informality of the proceedings under which he was condemned, he concludes, "It is therefore manifest that, none of these conditions being fulfilled in my case, I am acquitted before God of the crime of contumacy, and am unbound by a pretended and frivolous excommunication. I, John Huss, present this appeal to Jesus Christ, my master and just judge, who knows and protects the just cause of every one." *

He continued accordingly to preach at Prague till early in the year 1413, when the Archbishop interposed, and Huss retired, apparently to the place of his birth. But he continued to write, and his doctrines were readily received by the Bohemians, though zealously opposed by the great body of the clergy. On the meeting of the Council of Constance, in 1414, Huss was called before it, to declare and to defend his opinions. He had disobeyed the summons of the Pope, but he recognised the authority of the church in its general council, and obeyed its call with alacrity. It seems to have been his earnest desire to explain the grounds of his faith, and to confess his error, if he could be convinced of error, in those points wherein he differed from the received doctrines of the church. With this view, before he went to Constance, he appeared before a synod of the clergy held at Prague, with the express view of declaring and supporting his peculiar tenets : and when permission to do so was refused, he affixed placards in places of public resort,

* L'Enfant. Hist. de Concile de Constance, liv. 1.

in which he expressed his intention of appearing at Constance, and invited all who had any complaint to make against him to appear in support of it.*

The charges against Huss may be reduced to two heads (unless indeed they should rather be considered as one): that he was a follower of Wiclif, and that he was infected with the "leprosy of the Vaudois." The opinions contained under the latter charge are thus enumerated (with the exception of a few particulars), from *Æneas Sylvius*,† by Mr. Waddington; it being premised that, of those thus imputed to him, Huss expressly disavowed many. "The most important of them were these:—that the Pope is on a level with other bishops; that all priests are equal, except in regard to personal merit; that souls, on quitting their bodies, are immediately condemned to eternal punishment, or exalted to everlasting happiness; that the fire of purgatory has no existence; that prayers for the dead are a vain device, the invention of sacerdotal avarice; that the images of God and the saints should be destroyed; that the orders of mendicants were invented by evil spirits; that the clergy ought to be poor, subsisting on eleemosynary contributions; that it is free to all men to preach the word of God; that any one guilty of mortal sin is thereby disqualified for any dignity, secular or ecclesiastical; that confirmation and extreme unction are not among the

* He caused this document to be published at Nuremberg: "Master John Huss goes to Constance, there to declare the faith which he has always held, holds now, and, by God's grace, will hold unto death. As he has given public notice throughout the kingdom of Bohemia that he was willing before his departure to give account of his faith at a general synod of the Archbishopric of Prague, to answer all the objections which could be made to it, so he notifies in this imperial city of Nuremberg, that if any one has any error or heresy to object to him, such person has only to repair to the Council of Constance, since it is there that he is ready to give account of his faith" (*L'Enfant*. liv. i. p. 39).

† *Hist. Bohemica*, c. xxxv.

holy rites of the church ; that auricular confession is unprofitable, since confession to God is sufficient for pardon ; that the use of cemeteries is without reasonable foundation, and inculcated for the sake of profit ; that the world itself is the temple of the omnipotent God, and that those only derogate from his majesty who build churches, monasteries, or oratories ; that the sacerdotal vestments, the ornaments of the altars, the cups and other sacred utensils, are of no more than vulgar estimation ; that the suffrages of the saints who reign with Christ in heaven are unprofitable and vainly invoked ; that there is no holiday excepting Sunday ; that the festivals of the saints should by no means be observed ; and that the fasts established by the church are equally destitute of divine authority." Of these doctrines, whether truly or falsely imputed to Huss, many were of a nature to excite the anger of a corrupt and avaricious priesthood ; and he is said to have added another still more calculated to prejudice the minds of his judges against him : he maintained that tithes were strictly eleemosynary, and that it was free for the owner of the land to withhold or pay them according to the measure of his charity. He also maintained the right of the laity to participate in the sacramental cup. It appears from a short treatise, written in the year 1413, and exposed to public view at the chapel of Bethlehem, entitled 'Six Errors,' that he denied to the priesthood the power of granting remission of punishment and absolution from sin ; that he condemned the doctrine, that obedience is due to a superior in all things ; that he maintained that an unjust excommunication was not binding on the person against whom it was levelled ; and that he condemned as heretical the simoniacal offences against canon law, of which he accused a large portion of the clergy. He also in his sermons condemned as useless prayers for the souls of the dead, though it appears in the same sermon that he believed in purgatory ; and rebuked the avarice of the priests, by whom the practice of exacting large presents, as the price of ransoming souls from purgatory by their masses, had been invented.*

* L'Enfant. liv. i. pp. 36, 37.

The readiness of Huss to face the Council is not to be ascribed to ignorance of the risk which he was about to incur. He addressed a letter to one of his friends, with a request indorsed, that it might not be opened, except in case of his death : it contained a species of confession. He also wrote an exhortation to his Bohemian congregation, in which he urges them to remain constant in the doctrine which he had faithfully preached to them ; expresses his belief, that he should meet with more enemies at the council than Christ had at Jerusalem ; prays for health and strength to maintain the truth to the last, resolved to suffer any extremes, rather than betray the Gospel from any cowardice ; requests the prayers of his friends in his behalf ; and speaks very doubtfully of his return, expressing his willingness to die in God's cause.* Yet if good faith were necessarily inherent in high rank, he had no reason to fear. The Emperor Sigismond gave him a safe conduct, pledging himself, and enjoining his subjects, to facilitate and secure the safe passage of Huss to and fro : and Pope John XXIII. professed, " though John Huss should murder my own brother, I would use the whole of my power to preserve him from every injury, during all the time of his residence at Constance." He arrived in that city in November, 1414. But the first proceedings of the Council showed that anything rather than an impartial hearing was intended. Huss was committed to close custody, and denied the privilege of being heard by an advocate, though he lay sick in prison ; on the ground that the canon law allowed no one to undertake the defence of persons suspected of heresy. Meanwhile, he was harassed with private interrogatories, and denied a public audience before the assembled Council. This right he demanded with urgency ; and the interference of the Emperor Sigismond, who seems to have felt in this instance what was due to one who was placed under his protection, procured it for him. Early in June, 1415, the Council was convened, to hear the charges against him, and his defence. The first charge

L'Enfant. liv. i. p. 40.

was read, and he began to reply : but when he appealed to Scripture, as the authority on which his doctrines were founded, his voice was overwhelmed with clamour. He ceased : but when he again attempted to speak, the clamour was renewed ; and the assembly adjourned in confusion to June 7, on which day the Emperor was requested to preside in person. His presence secured more decency of proceeding. The charges brought against Huss were based chiefly on his supposed adherence to the doctrines of Wiclif (concerning the truth of which it was needless to dispute, since they had already been condemned by the Council, May 4, 1415), and on his opinion as to the administration of the Eucharist. The arguments which he was permitted to adduce were received, as before, with shouts of derision, and the assembly adjourned to the following day. It happened, and the coincidence was calculated to make a deep impression on the minds of those who inclined to his doctrines, that on that day an eclipse of the sun took place, which was total at Prague, and nearly total at Constance.

His audience was renewed on the following day. Of the opinions imputed to him, he rejected some, and admitted others ; and those which he did admit, he defended temperately and reasonably. The hearing being closed, he was required by the Council to retract his errors. It does not appear that any distinction was made between those which he admitted and those which he denied : the Council assumed, that he held certain opinions, and he was called to recant them in the gross, or to seal his adherence to them by martyrdom. His reply bears testimony to the purity of his motives and to the humility of his temper. "As to the opinions imputed to me, which I have never held, those I cannot retract ; as to those which I do indeed profess, I am ready to retract them, when I shall be better instructed by the Council." The Emperor, who had taken an active part in persuading him to save himself by submission,* now avowed his opinion, that "among the

* Sigismond is said to have blushed when Huss fixed his

errors of Huss, which had been in part proved, and in part confessed, there was not one which did not deserve the penal flames ;” and “ that the temporal sword ought instantly to be drawn, for the chastisement of his disciples, to the end that the branches of the tree might perish, together with its root.” The Council was not slow to inflict the penalty thus recommended. Huss was remanded to prison : his constancy was severely tried by a month’s imprisonment, in which every means of persuasion and solicitation were used to induce him to retract, and live. But he continued calm and resolved, in a strain of mind equally removed from pride and stubbornness, and from laxity and indifference, replying to those who urged him to abjure his belief, that “ he was prepared to afford an example in himself of that enduring patience which he had so frequently preached to others, and which he relied on the grace of God to grant him.” He retained this temper to the end ; and in this he may serve as a pattern or a rebuke to many persons, who, though zealous for the truth, have shown in the character of martyrs as much of bigotry and intolerance as their persecutors ; and this temper was shown nowhere more beautifully than in one of his last trials, “ if indeed (we quote from Mr. Waddington) we can so designate the upright counsel of a faithful and virtuous friend, for such was the circumstance which completed and crowned the history of his imprisonment ; and it should be everywhere recorded, for the honour of human nature. A Bohemian nobleman, named John of Chlum, had attended Huss, whose disciple he was, through all his perils and persecutions, and had exerted

eyes on him ; as he declared to the Council that he had come willingly under the pledged protection of the Emperor there present. Charles V., when pressed to arrest Luther at the Diet of Worms, is said, in allusion to this circumstance, to have used the following expression : “ I do not mean to blush with my predecessor Sigismond.” The conduct of the two emperors towards Huss and Luther is well contrasted throughout ; and Charles was not a less zealous Catholic than his predecessor.

throughout the whole affair every method that he could learn or devise to save him. At length, when every hope was lost, and he was about to separate from the martyr for the last time, he addressed him in these terms: 'My dear master, I am unlettered, and consequently unfit to counsel one so enlightened as you. Nevertheless, if you are secretly conscious of any one of those errors which have been publicly imputed to you, I do entreat you not to feel any shame in retracting it; but if, on the contrary, you are convinced of your innocence, I am so far from advising you to say anything against your conscience, that I exhort you rather to endure every form of torture, than to renounce anything which you hold to be true.' John Huss replied with tears, that God was his witness, how ready he had ever been, and still was, to retract on oath, and with his whole heart, from the moment he should be convicted of any error, by *evidence from the Holy Scripture*.* He confirmed this assertion in a letter, written on the eve of his execution, to the Senate of Prague, warning them that he had retracted and abjured nothing, but was ready to abjure and express his detestation of every proposition extracted from his books which could be proved contrary to Scripture.

Thus passed the month between his trial and his execution, not in struggles to avoid, but in preparation to meet his fate. "God," he said, "in his wisdom, has reasons for thus prolonging my life." On the 15th of July, he was brought before the Council for the last time. He listened on his knees while his sentence was read; and though it was endeavoured to prevent him from speaking, he asserted from time to time the falsehood of some of the charges brought against him. That of obstinacy, for instance, he repelled hardily. "This," he said, "I deny boldly. I always have, and do still desire to be better instructed by Scripture; and assert, that I am so zealous for the truth, that if by one word I could overthrow the errors of all heretics, there is no peril

* Hist. of Church, p. 594.

which I would not face for that end." Against the condemnation of his books he protested, because hitherto no errors had been shown to exist in them, and because, being chiefly written in Bohemian, or translated into languages understood by few of the members, the Council could not read, nor understand, nor, by consequence, legitimately condemn them. At the close of the sentence, he called God to witness his innocence, and offered a prayer that his judges and accusers might find pardon. Nothing then remained but to proceed to his degradation; and it may not be irrelevant to give a short account of the forms used in this ceremony, childish as they may appear. Certain bishops, appointed to perform this office, caused Huss to be robed in his full sacerdotal vestments, and a cup to be placed in his hand, as if he were going to perform mass. As they put upon him a long white robe, named the *aube*, he said, "Our Saviour was clothed, in mockery, in a white robe, when sent by Herod before Pilate:" and he made similar reflections as the other ensigns of the sacred functions were successively put upon him. Being thus dressed, the bishops again exhorted him to recant; but turning to the people, he declared in a loud voice, that he never would offend and seduce the faithful by a declaration so full of hypocrisy and impiety, and thus publicly protested his innocence. Then the bishops took from him the chalice, reciting the words, "O cursed Judas, who having forsaken the counsel of peace, hast entered into that of the Jews, we take away this cup, &c.," according to the common formula for degrading a priest. On this, Huss said aloud, that through the mercy of God, he hoped that day to drink of that cup in his kingdom. The bishops then took away his sacerdotal garments, one after the other, pronouncing some malediction at the removal of each. When they came to obliterate the tonsure, the mark of priesthood, a ludicrous question arose, whether scissors or razors should be used; and after a warm debate, it was decided in favour of the former. His hair was closely cropped, a pyramidal paper cap, an ell high, painted with figures of devils, and inscribed "Heresiarch," was put on his

head ; and thus attired, the prelates charitably consigned his soul to the infernal devils.* Divested thus of the sacred character of priesthood, he was delivered over to the secular power, represented by the Emperor, under whose safe-conduct he had repaired to Constance, and who had yet openly given his voice for causing the heretic to expiate his errors by the torments of fire. The Emperor charged the Elector Palatine with the duty of seeing the penalties of the law inflicted : and it is said, that a succeeding elector, the descendant in the fourth generation of the person thus employed, who was a favourer of the Reformation, and dying childless, witnessed the extinction of his line, was wont to attribute that misfortune to the anger of Heaven, punishing in the fourth generation the bigoted and cruel eagerness with which his ancestor had executed the unholy task intrusted to him on this occasion.

Huss was immediately conducted to the stake, and suffered his agonizing death with unshaken firmness. It is told by an old writer of his life, that the people said, hearing the fervency of his address to God, " We do not know what this man has done before ; but now, we hear him offer up excellent prayers." His ashes were carefully collected and cast into the Rhine, lest they should serve to keep up the affection of his friends : but the precaution was vain, for we are told† that the very earth of the spot on which he was burnt was collected as a sacred relic, and carried into Bohemia by his disciples.

Before the fate of Huss was determined, the Council had wreaked a tardy vengeance on his forerunner and preceptor Wiclif, whose body was ordered " to be taken from the ground, and thrown far away from the burial of any church." After the lapse of thirteen years, the empty insult was most effectually executed, by disintering and burning the reformer's body, and casting the ashes into a neighbouring brook. The often quoted

* *Animam tuam devovemus infernis diabolis. Æn. Sylv.*

† *Æneas Sylvius, Hist. Bohemica, c. xxxvi.*

words of Fuller on this occasion may be equally well applied to the good man whose history has just been related :—"The brook did convey his ashes into Avon ; Avon into Severn ; Severn into the narrow seas ; they into the main ocean. And thus the ashes of Wiclif are the emblem of his doctrine, which now is dispersed all the world over."

Jerome of Prague has been already mentioned as the most distinguished among Huss's followers, and his coadjutor in preaching. He also was summoned to Constance in the spring of 1415, before Huss had suffered martyrdom ; and it was probably in consequence of witnessing his companion's sufferings that he was induced to retract, to condemn in the strongest terms, as blasphemous and seditious, the tenets which in his heart he still continued to hold, and to profess his entire adherence to all the doctrines of the Roman church. Fortunately he was not left to endure through life the reproaches of conscience ; for the continued enmity and mistaken persecution of his adversaries conferred a benefit on him which they were far from intending. He was still retained in confinement, and harassed with fresh charges, though his retraction had been ample and complete : for there were many who thought that hostility to the hierarchy could not be expiated except by blood. At last he obtained a public audience before the Council, on the 23rd of May, 1416 ; when he recalled his former recantation, confessing that it had been dictated only by the fear of a painful death. There is a close coincidence between the history of Jerome, and that of the father of our English church, Cranmer, who suffered a similar death in the following century. Both swerved through the influence of fear from the path of duty : both were punished for their weakness by being treacherously deprived of that temporal advantage which was the price of their apostacy ; and, being recalled by that mistaken malice to their duty, both redeemed their virtue, and have obtained eternal honour in exchange for a short and shameful breathing-time on earth. Poggio the Florentine, who was a witness of the whole course

of Jerome's trial, has left a long and interesting account of it in a letter to Leonardo Aretino, from which it appears that his sympathy had been strongly excited by the constancy of the sufferer. Though connected with the highest dignitaries of the church, he writes in such a strain of admiration, that his friend thought it necessary to warn him of the danger which he might incur by speaking of a condemned heretic in such terms. The letter will be found entirely translated in Mr. Shepherd's *Life of Poggio Bracciolini*, from which the following description of Jerome's final sufferings is extracted :—
“No stoic ever suffered death with such constancy of mind ; when he arrived at the place of execution he stripped himself of his garments, and knelt down before the stake, to which he was soon after tied with ropes and a chain. Then great pieces of wood, intermixed with straw, were piled as high as his breast. When fire was set to the pile, he began to sing a hymn, which was scarcely interrupted by the smoke and flame. I must not omit a striking circumstance, which shows the firmness of his mind. When the executioner was going to apply the fire behind him, in order that he might not see it, he said, Come this way, and kindle it in my sight ; for if I had been afraid of it, I should never have come to this place. Thus perished a man in every respect exemplary, except in the erroneousness of his faith. I was a witness of his end, and observed every particular of its process. He may have been heretical in his notions, and obstinate in persevering in them : but he certainly died like a philosopher. I have rehearsed a long story ; as I wish to employ my leisure in relating a transaction which far surpasses the events of ancient history. For neither did Mutius suffer his hand to be burnt so patiently as Jerome endured the burning of his whole body ; nor did Socrates drink the hemlock as cheerfully as Jerome submitted to the fire.”

If it were really hoped to purge the dross of heresy from Bohemia by this fiery ordeal, the result is another lesson to prove the inutility of combating opinion by violence. The nobility considered the breach of the

Emperor's safe-conduct as an insult to the kingdom of Bohemia: the commons, prepared for rebellion against the spiritual dominion of Rome, and inflamed by the fate of their loved and venerated teachers, broke into acts of violence. Fresh measures of provocation on each side soon led to extremities; a crusade was proclaimed against Bohemia by Pope Martin V., and headed by the Emperor Sigismond; and the quarrel was thus fairly committed to the arbitration of the sword. Enthusiasm made up for the apparent inequality of force: the insurgents assumed the name of Taborites, named the mountain on which they pitched their tents Tabor, and stigmatized their neighbours by the names of the idolatrous nations from whom the Israelites won the Holy Land. They often defeated the armies of the church, and maintained their ground so firmly, that in 1433 the Council of Basle endeavoured to invite their leaders to a conference. This attempt at pacification failed; but it taught the Catholics how to avail themselves of the religious differences which distracted these enthusiastic men: and in 1436, the church and the Emperor gained the final ascendancy, more by civil discord than by the sword. But in the fifteenth century, a numerous party in Bohemia preserved the faith for which Huss and Jerome had suffered, and their fathers had fought; and received with joy the ampler reformation preached by Luther.

The second subject which we have proposed to notice belongs to a period of much interest in British history, that of the fruitless attempt of Charles II. to re-impose episcopacy upon the Scottish nation. Few spectacles are more elevating and more improving than the patient endurance of evil for conscience' sake even in an individual; and it is still more impressive, where a multitude are actuated by common feelings and a common principle. Such was the case with the persecuted body of the Scottish Presbetyrian recusants; and if there be any to whom the questions, whether a written ritual or extemporaneous prayer should be used, whether the Episcopal or Presbyterian form of church government should prevail, appear

insufficient grounds of dispute to justify a civil war, it is to be remembered that in this case the aggression was entirely on the side of the government; that Charles II. had more than once taken the Covenant, the mere refusal to abjure which was now thought worthy of death; that the rebels, if that name be applicable to them, sought nothing more than liberty to serve God after their own consciences; and further, that the arbitrary violence which would have annulled the established church of Scotland, to substitute another which the bulk of the nation hated, was only one of that series of mistaken and criminal measures which led to the expulsion of the House of Stuart from the throne. Upwards of three hundred ministers were driven from their livings in one day, to derive a scanty maintenance from their poor but zealous hearers: but these men neither offered resistance, nor preached rebellion, until they were debarred from performing their pastoral office. And even when they and their followers did take arms, it was originally in self-defence, to protect meetings for the peaceable purpose of divine worship, held in the wildest recesses of the trackless hills, from the fury of a most licentious soldiery, which even that strict concealment could not mitigate or elude. That the better cause was disgraced by some extravagances and crimes, and that it gave rise in some to a morose and gloomy spirit of fanaticism, will not surprise any who have considered the effect of persecution, which, the very converse of mercy, is twice cursed in its operation, a curse on him who inflicts, as on him who suffers. Driven to assemble in moss and mountain, girt with their swords, and prepared to defend life and faith by the strong hand, it is no wonder if these men turned in preference to the warlike pages of the sacred records, and in tone, and conduct, and phraseology imitated the martial leaders and reformers of Judæa, rather than the milder teachers of the religion which it was their boast to hold fast in its utmost purity. Continually occupied by the thought of death, engaged in a constant struggle to subdue their natural fears and affections into the resolution to serve the Lord after what they deemed the only true

faith, and to abide in him to the uttermost, it is no wonder that Cameron, Cargill, Peden, and other zealous preachers, whose rude and stern eloquence roused the Scottish peasant to the indurance of martyrdom, in many instances lost sight of reason in enthusiasm, and in some, themselves or their followers, committed acts which rendered them justly amenable to legal punishment.* It forms,

* The murder of Archbishop Sharpe is the most celebrated and remarkable of these instances of perverted enthusiasm, mistaken applications of the Old Testament, and determination to see a *special* Providence in passing events. Burley, Rathillet, and their associates, when they met on the Magus Muir, had no thought of harming Sharpe: but when his coach passed that way, they concluded that the Lord had delivered him into their hands; and therefore they killed him. For the effect of the persecution, see Fox's Hist. of James II. "This system of government, and especially the rigour with which those concerned in the late insurrections, the excommunication of the king, or the other outrages complained of, were pursued and hunted, sometimes by bloodhounds, sometimes by soldiers almost equally savage, and afterwards shot like wild beasts, drove some of those sectaries who were styled Cameronians, and other proscribed persons, to measures of absolute desperation. They made a declaration, which they caused to be affixed to different churches, importing that they would use the law of retaliation, and '*we will,*' said they, '*punish as enemies to God, and to the Covenant, such persons as shall make it their work to imbrue their hands in our blood; and chiefly, if they shall continue obstinately and with habitual malice to proceed against us:*' with more to the like effect. Upon such an occasion, the interference of government became necessary. The government did indeed interfere, and by a vote of council ordered, that whoever owned, or refused to disown, the declaration on oath, should be put to death, in the presence of two witnesses, though unarmed when taken. The execution of this massacre, in the twelve counties which were principally concerned, was committed to the military, and exceeded, if possible, the order itself. The disowning the declaration was required to be made in a particular form prescribed. Women obstinate in their fanaticism, lest female blood should be a stain upon the swords of soldiers engaged in this honour-

however, no part of our subject to enter into a defence of their conduct or doctrine. The lofty spirit of resignation in which they met their fate is the only point in their history which admits of comparison with the subject-matter of this chapter: and in this respect, the Athenian philosopher had no advantage over the humblest of these unlettered peasants. The stories of their resignation, nay of their exultation in the hour of trial, have been preserved by tradition; and their scattered graves in the wild moorlands of Southern Scotland are still regarded with veneration and affection. May it be long before a feeling dies away, so well calculated to keep alive a hatred of oppression, and a strong sense of the importance of religion!

There is extant a singular and affecting account of the able employment, were drowned. The habitations, as well of those who had fled to save themselves, as of those who suffered, were burnt and destroyed. Such members of the families of the delinquents as were above twelve years old, were imprisoned for the purpose of being afterwards transported. The brutality of the soldiers was such as might be expected from an army let loose from all restraint, and employed to execute the royal justice, as it was called, upon wretches. Graham, who has been mentioned before, and who, under the title of Lord Dundee (a title which was probably conferred on him by James for these or similar services), was afterwards esteemed such a hero among the Jacobite party, particularly distinguished himself. Of six unarmed fugitives whom he seized, he caused four to be shot in his presence, nor did the remaining two experience any other mercy from him than a delay of their doom; and at another time, having intercepted the flight of one of these victims, he had him shown to his family, and then murdered in the arms of his wife. The example of persons of such high rank, and who must be presumed to have had an education in some degree corresponding to their station, could not fail of operating upon men of a lower order in society. The carnage became every day more general, and more indiscriminate; and the murder of peasants at their houses, or while employed in their usual work in the fields, by the soldiers, was not only not reprov'd or punished, but deemed a meritorious service by their superiors." Chap. ii. p. 128-30.

death of one of these sufferers, written by Alexander Peden, an enthusiastic preacher of the Cameronian sect, which is rendered more striking by the rudeness of the narrative, and the minute circumstantiality of the details. This is one of the passages which we propose to take from this portion of our history; the other consists of some extracts relative to the sufferings and death of one of the most accomplished and discreet, as well as most pious, of the ministers who suffered during the persecution under the two last kings of the Stuart family. The former of these two, by name John Brown, was a small farmer and carrier, resident at Priesthill, in the parish of Muirkirk, an upland district on the borders of Ayrshire and Lanarkshire; "a man" says Wodrow, "of shining piety, who had great measures of solid digested knowledge and experience, and a singular talent of a most plain and affecting way of communicating his knowledge to others." This man was orderly, sedate, and discreet, and nowise obnoxious to the ruling party, except as a conscientious and inflexible seceder from the Episcopalian worship attempted to be imposed. Our tale is taken from a publication entitled the 'Life of Mr. Alexander Peden,' published about the year 1720.*

"In the beginning of May, 1685, he (Mr. Alexander Peden) came to the house of John Brown and Marion Weir, whom he married before he went to Ireland, where he staid all night, and in the morning, when he took farewell, he came out of the door, saying to himself, 'Poor woman, a fearful morning,' twice over; 'A dark misty morning.' The next morning, between five and six hours, the said John Brown having performed the worship of God in his family, was going with a spade in his hand to make ready some peat ground: the mist being very dark, he knew not until cruel and bloody

* The following passage, with other interesting particulars relative to these times, is to be found in Scott's 'Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border.' It is hardly necessary to refer to 'Old Mortality,' as a most vivid and affecting picture of this interesting period of our history, though coloured by the author's prejudices in favour of the dominant party.

Claverhouse compassed him with three troops of horse, brought him to his house, and then examined him ; who, though he was a man of a stammering speech, yet answered him distinctly and solidly ; which made Claverhouse to examine those whom he had taken to be his guide through the muirs, if ever they heard him preach. They answered, No, no ; he was never a preacher. He said, ' If he has not preached, mickle has he prayed in his time.' He said to John, ' Go to your prayers, for you shall immediately die.' When he was praying, Claverhouse interrupted him three times : one time that he stopt him, he was pleading that the Lord would spare a remnant, and not make a full end in the day of his anger. Claverhouse said, ' I gave you time to pray, and ye are begun to preach : ' he turned about upon his knees and said, ' Sir, you know neither the nature of preaching or praying, that calls this preaching.' Then continued without confusion ; when ended, Claverhouse said, ' Take good-night of your wife and children.' His wife standing by with her child in her arms that she had brought forth to him, and another child of his first wife's, he came to her, and said, ' Now Marion, the day is come, that I told you would come when I first spake to you of marrying me.' She said, ' Indeed, John, I can willingly part with you.' ' Then,' he said, ' this is all I desire, I have no more to do but to die.' He kissed his wife and bairns, and wished purchased and promised blessings to be multiplied upon them, and his blessing. Claverhouse ordered six soldiers to shoot him : * the most part of the bullets came upon his head, which scattered his brains on the ground. Claverhouse said to his wife, ' What thinkest thou of thy husband now, woman ? ' She said, ' I thought ever much of him, and now as much as ever.' He said, ' It were justice to lay thee beside him.' She said, ' If ye were permitted, I doubt not but that your crueltie would go that length ; but how will ye make answer for this morning's work ? ' He said, ' To man I can be

* * Wodrow says that the soldiers hesitated, or refused to fire, and that Claverhouse shot Brown with his own hands.

answerable ; and for God, I will take him in my own hand.' Claverhouse mounted his horse, and marched, and left her with the corpse of her dead husband lying there ; she set the bairn upon the ground, and gathered his brains, and tied up his head, and straighted his body, and covered him in her plaid, and sat down and wept over him. It being a very desolate place, where never verdure grew, and far from neighbours, it was some time before any friends came to her ; the first that came was a very fit hand, that old singular Christian woman in the Cumberhead, named Elizabeth Menzies, three miles distant, who had been tried with the violent death of her husband at Pentland, afterwards of two worthy sons, Thomas Weir, who was killed at Drumclog, and David Steel, who was suddenly shot afterwards when taken. The said Marion Weir sitting upon her husband's grave, told me, that before that, she could see no blood but what she was in danger to faint ; and yet she was helped to be a witness to all this, without either fainting or confusion, except when the shots were let off, her eyes dazzled. His corpse was buried at the end of his house, where he was slain, with this inscription on his grave-stone :—

In earth's cold bed, the dusty part here lies
Of one who did the earth as dust despise !
Here in this place, from earth he took departure ;—
Now he has got the garland of the martyr.

This murder was committed between six and seven in the morning : Mr. Peden was about ten or eleven miles distant, having been in the fields all night ; he came to the house between seven and eight, and desired to call in the family, that he might pray amongst them. When praying, he said, ' Lord, when wilt thou avenge Brown's blood ? Oh ! let Brown's blood be precious in thy sight ! and hasten the day when thou wilt avenge it, with Cameron's, Cargill's, and many others of our martyrs' names ; and oh ! for that day, when the Lord would avenge all their bloods.'

" When ended, John Muirhead inquired what he meant by Brown's blood ? He said twice over, ' What

do I mean? Claverhouse has been at the Priesthill this morning, and has cruelly murdered John Brown: his corpse was lying at the end of his house, and his poor wife sitting weeping by his corpse, and not a soul to speak a word comfortably to her.' "

It is not to be supposed that this atrocity was single or singular in its nature, or that it and others rest upon doubtful testimony. "No historical facts," says Mr. Fox, "are better ascertained than the account of these instances of cruelty which are to be found in Wodrow." And the extent to which they were carried may be appreciated from the number of military executions or murders recorded by that author,* in the two first months only of the year in which the above tragedy was enacted. Neither must it be supposed that these were the unwarranted excesses of a brutal soldiery: the Privy Council, the chief executive power of Scotland, clearly pointed out the line of conduct to be pursued in its instructions;†

* We give an abstract, to show both the number and nature of the crimes which were punished with death.

Jan. 23. Six persons shot, surprised in prayer, in the parish of Monigaff, Galloway.

Jan. 31. One person shot, taken in hiding, in Durisdeer, Nithsdale.

Jan. 31. Four shot, for refusing the oath of abjuration. Straiton, Ayrshire.

Feb. 19. Four shot and two hanged, taken in hiding. Orr, Galloway.

Feb. 21. Five killed at Kirkconnel.

Feb. 28. One killed at Barr, in Carrick.

Ten others killed in the above month, at different times, dates uncertain, facts certain. And so on, through the year, but especially the first half. All these, it will be observed, are military executions solely, not men slain in fighting, nor men condemned by the civil power. Wodrow, book iii. chap. 9. § 6.

† Instructions to General-Lieutenant Drummond for marching to the southern and western shires. Edinb. April 21, 1685.

"Imo. You are to employ all his majesties standing forces, in the southern and western shires, or so many of them as

and in its dealings with the prisoners brought before it, showed equally clearly that the exceeding of their orders in severity would not be harshly construed. There are few who do not recollect the scene in 'Old Mortality,' in which the preacher Macbriar is examined before the Council: and the fiction does go one step beyond the reality, as detailed in the authentic pages of Wodrow. Those who did not perish by shot or sword, had often reason to wish that their sufferings had been ended by the summary method of military execution. Torture was pitilessly used to extract confession; and branding, banishment, and hanging, were largely employed, not only against the violent spirits whom persecution had driven

you shall find expedient, for pursuing, suppressing, and utterly destroying all such fugitive rebels as resist, and disturb the peace and quiet of his majesties government: and you are to cause immediately shoot such of them to death, as you immediately find in arms.

"2do. You shall give order to apprehend all persons suspect for harbourers, or reseters of rebels, and fugitive vagabonds: and punish such as you find guilty, according to law."

He is farther warranted to take free quarters, for all persons under his command (not being of his majesty's forces), in all places where rebels, and fugitives, and vagabonds are suspected of being reset, harboured, or connived at.

There is something at once ludicrous and revolting in the following complaint, and the remedy applied to the grievance. It is a good specimen of the way in which the Council exercised their inquisitorial functions:—

"July 14. The magistrates of Glasgow present a petition to the council, showing that their tolbooth is pestered with many silly old women, who are a great charge to the town. The council order them to be whipped and burnt on the cheek severely, who are guilty of reset and converse; and such as are guilty of ill principles, that they be whipped and all dismissed." Wodrow, Hist. of Sufferings of Church of Scotland, vol. iii. chap. ix. § 3.

Reset and converse are the harbouring and intercourse with proscribed persons: *guilty of ill principles* is a phrase of convenient latitude; but must be understood to signify affection to the kirk and covenant.

to assume arms, but against those who offered none but passive resistance. And this severity was the cause, not the consequence, of the more violent sects rising in arms: it was the result of a premeditated scheme to oppress, if not to root out, Presbyterianism, as tending to keep alive a spirit of independence, civil as well as religious. With this intention, the ministers and other prominent persons were first attacked under form of law: it was not until their firmness proved to be inexpugnable, that the act of assembling for worship was itself proscribed. Even so early as 1661, Mr. James Guthrie, one of the most eminent ministers of the Scottish church, a man of moderation and discretion, as well as zeal, learning, and piety, was singled out as a victim. Hume's account of this transaction is a good specimen of the spirit in which he treats of this period of history. "It was deemed political to hold over men's heads for some time the terror of punishment, till they should have made the requisite compliances with the new government. Though neither the king's temper nor plan of administration led him to severity, some examples, after such a bloody and triumphant rebellion, seemed necessary; and the Marquis of Argyle, and one Guthrie were pitched upon as the victims. . . Guthrie was a seditious preacher, and had personally affronted the king: his punishment gave surprise to nobody." On this passage, we have to observe, that Guthrie was not a person unknown or insignificant, to be spoken of thus contemptuously (*one Guthrie*); and in denial the latter statements, to quote the following extract from Wodrow, whose testimony we do not hesitate to prefer to that of Hume, neither quoting their authority. "The king himself was so sensible of his (Guthrie's) good services to him and his interest when at the lowest, and of the severity of this sentence, that when he got notice of it, he asked with some warmth, 'And what have you done with Mr. Patrick Gillespie?' It was answered that Mr. Gillespie had so many friends in the house, his life could not be taken. 'Well,' said the king, 'if I had known you would have spared Mr. Gillespie, I would have

spared Mr. Guthrie.* And indeed there was reason for it, as to one who had been so firm and zealous a supporter of his Majesties title and interest, and had suffered so much for his continued opposition to, and disowning of the English usurpation." And far from being an insignificant person, whose death might be passed over as a matter of no account, the greatest pains were taken to induce him to save his life by making concessions, with the value of which, as coming from him, the court party were well acquainted. But his offence and the reason for pursuing him to death are not obscurely hinted at in the first sentence of our extract from Hume: he had stood up against invasion of the rights of the Presbyterian kirk, which the king, in swearing to the Covenant, had bound himself to uphold; and therefore he was made an example, "to hold over men's heads the terror of punishment, till they should have made the requisite compliances with the new government." The charge against him was treason and sedition, founded principally on the language of a petition adopted by a meeting of ministers, August 23, 1660, of which he was one, and on two publications, the 'Western Remonstrance,' and 'Causes of God's Wrath,' in the sentiments of both of which he expressed his concurrence on his trial: and in his last speech he acknowledged himself the author of the latter. From one of his speeches before the parliament, we extract the following passage, which is worth the attention of those who think that opinions are to be stifled by violence.

"My lord, my conscience I cannot submit, but this

* Wodrow, book i., chap. 2, § 4.

† Burnet says, "he gave no advantage to those that wished to have saved him, by the least step towards any submission, but much to the contrary. I saw him suffer. He was so far from showing any fear, that he rather expressed a contempt of death. He spoke an hour on the ladder with the composedness of one that was delivering a sermon, rather than his last words. He justified all that had been done, and exhorted all people to adhere to the Covenant, which he magnified highly." Burnet, Hist. of his own Times.

old crazy body, and mortal flesh I do submit, to do with it whatsoever you will, whether by death, or banishment, or imprisonment, or anything else ; only I beseech you to ponder well what profit there is in my blood : it is not the extinguishing of me or many others that will extinguish the Covenant and work of reformation since the year 1638. My blood, bondage, or banishment will contribute more for the propagation of those things than my life or liberty could do, though I should live many years.”*

His death, however, was resolved on ; and in spite of the vigour of his defence, and the laxness of the charges against him, on which no lawyer since the Revolution would have dared to build a charge of constructive treason, he was found guilty and sentenced to be hanged ; which sentence was carried into effect June 1, 1661. He commenced his dying speech in these words :—

“ Men and brethren, I fear many of you are come hither to gaze, rather than to be edified by the carriage and last words of a dying man ; but if any have an ear to hear, as I hope some of this great confluence have, I desire your audience to a few words. I am come hither to lay down this earthly tabernacle and mortal flesh of mine, and, I bless God, through his grace, I do it willingly, and not by constraint. I say, I suffer willingly : if I had been so minded, I might have made a division, and not been a prisoner ; but being conscious to myself of nothing worthy of death or bonds, I could not stain my innocency with the suspicion of guiltiness, by my withdrawing ; neither have I wanted opportunities and advantages to escape since I was prisoner,—not by the fault of my keepers, God knoweth, but otherwise ; but neither for this had I light or liberty, lest I should reflect upon the Lord’s name, and offend the generation of the righteous : and if some men have not been mistaken, or dealt deceitfully in telling me so, I might have avoided not only the severity of the sentence, but also had much

* Wodrow, book i. chap. 2.

favour and countenance in complying with the courses of the times. But I durst not redeem my life with the loss of my integrity, God knoweth I durst not; and that since I was prisoner, he hath so holden me by the hand, that he never suffered me to bring it in debate in my inward thoughts, much less to propose or hearken to any overture of that kind. I did judge it better to suffer than to sin; and therefore I am come hither to lay down my life this day."

He proceeded to justify his own loyalty, and the conduct for which he was condemned, as in no way treasonable or seditious, but a conscientious upholding of the rights and privileges of the church: and bearing testimony to the sacredness of the Covenant, and to his own adherence to it, and to the doctrine and discipline of the Presbyterian church, he concluded in an exalted strain of piety and thankfulness, and met his death, according to the testimony of Burnet, above quoted, with the utmost tranquillity.

"It was very confidently asserted at this time, that some weeks after Mr. Guthrie's head had been set up on the Netherbow Port in Edinburgh, the commissioner's coach coming down that way, several drops of blood fell from the head upon the coach, which all their art and diligence could not wipe off. I have it very confidently affirmed, that physicians were called, and inquired if any natural cause could be assigned for the blood dropping so long after the head was put up, and especially for it not washing out of the leather; and they could give none. This odd incident beginning to be talked of, and all other methods being tried, at length the leather was removed, and a new cover put on: this was much sooner done than the wiping off the guilt of this great and good man's blood from the shedders of it, and this poor nation. The above report I shall say no more of; it was generally spoken of at the time, and is yet firmly believed by many: at this distance I cannot fully vouch it as certain; perhaps it may be thought too miraculous for the age we are now in: but this I will affirm, that Mr. Guthrie's blood was of so crying a nature, that even Sir George

Mackenzie was sensible that all his rhetoric, though he was a great master in that sort, had not been sufficient to drown it, for which cause he very wisely passed it over in silence."*

This is rather a remarkable instance of a common superstition. The reader who will consult the original authorities, will be struck by the elevated tone of joyful anticipation with which the sufferers of this period almost uniformly met death. See the accounts of King, Mackail, Renwick, and many others. Compare these deaths with those of Socrates or Cato, and we have the best exemplification of the practical difference between Christianity and Heathenism, even in its purest forms. "The Heathen looked on death without fear, the Christian exulted."†

The English reader will naturally look in a chapter devoted to the subjects by which this is occupied, for some account of the persecution of the reformed church of his own country in the reign of Mary. This is a period very different in character from that persecution of the Scottish Presbyterians, which we have just described, but not inferior in interest. Their stubborn opposition for conscience' sake is well contrasted by the mild submission of the English reformers for conscience' sake also; as the ascetic lives, and in many cases the stern and gloomy tenets of the former are contrasted with the innocent and decent cheerfulness, and more attractive doctrines, encouraged, practised, and preached, by the latter. These differences may be explained by various causes, arising from a difference of national character and natural circumstances. The Scotch have always been a people not lightly moved, but stern in temper, and stubborn in endurance when roused into action: and their wild country and defensible fastnesses rendered it easy, in the first instance, to withdraw from vexatious interference, in the second, when pursued, to oppose violence successfully. And besides, the resolute resistance of the Cameronians and others was the fruit of a spirit of independence of long growth,

* Wodrow, book i. chap. 2. † Last Days of Pompeii.

fostered by long contests with the crown, both in England and Scotland; and the civil wars had effectually broken down the notion, that it was forbidden to take up arms, even for conscience' sake, against the powers that be. That their conduct, if not always judicious, was in its main principles worthy of honour and admiration, we have already stated to be our opinion: but we are not on that account less ready to admire the calm submission of the English reformers, coupled with their resolute upholding of the truth. The Scottish zealots had studied the Old Testament till they had imbibed rather too much of the Jewish temper: the conduct of the fathers of our church was full of the very spirit of Christianity. The latter were not more distinguished than the former for uprightness of life, devotion to the truth, as they received it, or readiness to seal their adherence to it by death. But they had the advantage in depth of learning, in a more temperate gravity of conduct, and soundness of judgment: and it is on these accounts, as well as by reason of the more eminent station which they filled in the eyes of the world, that they have always been revered as shining lights; while the persecuted sects of Scotland were long regarded by those who were but generally acquainted with that period of our history, either with hatred or contempt in proportion as the cruel extravagances of a few, or the so-called moroseness, and puritanical precision of the many, made most impression.

The stories of Cranmer, Latimer, and Ridley, and others high in rank, are familiarly known even to children; in whose limited circle of historical reading the horrors of this period have been suffered to hold too prominent a place. Less known to fame, yet not inferior to any, it should seem, in the qualities of the heart and the understanding, was he whose memorable death we have selected for narration; and in whose rustic simplicity of deportment, and somewhat coarse jocularly, and grotesque contour of person (a circumstance which is to be inferred from various parts of the narrative), we trace a resemblance, slight, and unimportant, yet not uninteresting, to the Athenian philoso-

pher, as well as in his care, retained to the last, for the feelings and welfare of his friends, and his resolute refusal to compromise the goodness of his cause by flight.

"Of Rowland Taylor (says Bishop Heber) neither the name nor the misfortunes are obscure. He was distinguished among the divines of the Reformation for his abilities, his learning, and piety; and he suffered death at the stake on Aldham Common, near Hadleigh, in the third year of Queen Mary, amid the blessings and lamentations of his parishioners, and with a courageous and kindly cheerfulness which has scarcely its parallel, even in those days of religious heroism."

"There is nothing indeed more beautiful, in the whole beautiful Book of Martyrs, than the account which Fox has given of Rowland Taylor, whether in the discharge of his duty as a parish priest, or in the more arduous moments when he was called on to bear his cross in the cause of religion. His warmth of heart, his simplicity of manners, the total absence of the false stimulants of enthusiasm or pride, and the abundant overflow of better and holier feelings, are delineated, no less than his courage in death, and the buoyant cheerfulness with which he encountered it, with a spirit only inferior to the eloquence and dignity of the Phædon. Something, indeed, must be allowed for the manners of the age, before we can be reconciled to the coarse vigour of his pleasantry, his jocose menace to Bonner, and his jests with the Sheriff on his own stature and corpulency. But nothing can be more delightfully told than his refusal to fly from the Lord Chancellor's officers; his dignified yet modest determination to await death in the discharge of his duty; and his affectionate and courageous parting with his wife and children. His recollection, when led to the stake, of 'the blind man and woman,' his pensioners, is of the same delightful character; nor has Plato anything more touching than the lamentation of his parishioners over his dishonoured head and long white beard, and his own meek rebuke to the wretch who drew blood from that venerable countenance. Let not my readers blame me

for this digression. 'They will have cause to thank me, if it induces them to refer to a history which few men have ever read without its making them 'sadder and better.' '*

Rowland Taylor, "a right perfect divine," and parish priest, according to the manners of the time, was chaplain to Archbishop Cranmer; but on being appointed rector of Hadleigh, a small town in Suffolk, he quitted his patron's family, to devote himself entirely to the care of his living; and by his diligent study, and preaching, and attention to the temporal as well as spiritual welfare of his people, he both recommended the doctrines which he taught, and acquired the esteem and love of his parishioners in an uncommon degree. Such was his occupation and character during the reign of Edward VI.: on the accession of Mary, he was one of the first to suffer for his adherence to the church and to the laws, in consequence of his resistance to the attempts made to reinstate Popish priests and Popish ceremonies in the parochial churches. In this scheme to reconcile England to the Pope, the renegade Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester, and the brutal and ferocious Bonner, Bishop of London, who figure prominently in the following narrative, were the most zealous actors. The length and prolix style of the original forbids us to extract the entire story from the Book of Martyrs; but we shall adhere to it as closely as we can, as well for the sake of giving (according to the principle laid down in our introduction) a specimen of the style of that remarkable work, as for the characteristic touches and intrinsic beauty of a great part of the narration. It begins with an account of Taylor's character and parochial labours up to the death of Edward VI., and the subsequent attempts of his sister and successor Mary, to restore, by violence, the supremacy of the Roman Catholic religion.

"In the beginning of this rage of Antichrist (1553), a certain petie gentleman, after the sort of a lawyer,

* Heber's 'Life of Bishop Taylor,' the worthy descendant of this excellent man.

called Foster, a bitter persecutor in those days, with one John Clerk, of Hadley, conspired to bring in the Pope and his maumetrie* again into Hadley Church. To this purpose they builded up with all haste possible the altar, intending to bring in their masse againe, about the Palme Sunday. But this their device took none effect; for in the night the altar was beaten down; wherefore they built it up againe the second time, and laid diligent watch, lest any should againe break it down.

"On the day following came Foster and John Clerk, bringing with them their Popish sacrificer, who brought with him all his implements and garments to play his Popish pageant, whom they and their men guarded with iswords and bucklers, lest any man should disturbe him n his missall sacrifice.

"When Dr. Taylor, who (according to his custome) sat at his booke studying the word of God, heard the bells ring, hee arose, and went into the church, supposing something had been there to be done, according to his pastorall office: and coming to the church, he found the church doores shut, and fast barred, saving the chancel doore, which was only latched, where he entering, and comming into the chancell, saw a Popish sacrificer in his robes, with a broad new shaven crown, ready to begin his Popish sacrifice, beset about with drawn swords and bucklers, lest any man should approach to disturbe him.

"Then said Dr. Taylor, 'Thou divell, who made thee so bold to enter into this church of Christ, to prophane and defile it with this abominable idolatry?'

* By a singular specimen of ignorance, our ancestors, who held the Mahometans in pious abomination, chose to consider that sect, which holds images in abomination, as idolaters. Hence the word mawmet, or maumet, and maumetry, are continually used in our early writers for idol, and idolatry. "Unleful worshipping of mawmetis."—Wiclif, 1 Pet. iv. 3. "When the Byshop Amphiarax sodeynly fell down into hell," according to Lydgate, Story of Thebes, it was the

"Mede of ydolatrie,
Of rightes olde, and false mammentrye."—*Carton's edition.*

With that start up Foster, and, with an ireful and furious countenance, said to Dr. Taylor, 'Thou traitor, what doest thou here, to let and disturb the Queene's proceedings?' Dr. Taylor answered, 'I am no traitor, but I am the shepherd that God, my Lord Christ, hath appointed to feed this his flock; wherefore I have good authority to bee here, and I command thee, thou Popish wolf, in the name of God, to avoid hence, and not to presume here with such Popish idolatry to poison Christ's flock.'"

Taylor being violently put out of the church, the mass was continued. But he was a man to be feared for his integrity, courage, and ability, and therefore to be destroyed: and in those times, the transaction which we have just related furnished means of proceeding against him under colour of law. In a few days, upon complaint of Clerk and Foster, he was cited to appear before Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester, and Lord Chancellor. "When his friends heard this, they earnestly counselled him to depart and flye; alledging and declaring unto him, that he could neither be indifferently heard to speak his conscience and mind, nor yet look for justice or favour at the said Chancellor's hands, who, as it was well knowne, was most fierce and cruell; but must needs (if he went up to him) wait for imprisonment and cruell death at his hands."

"Then said Dr. Taylor to his friends, 'Dear friends, I most heartily thank you that you have so tender a care over mee; and although I know that there is neither justice nor truth to be looked for at my adversaries' hands, but rather imprisonment and cruell death, yet I know my cause to be so good and righteous, and the truth so strong on my side, that I will, by God's grace, go and appear before them, and to their beards resist their false doings.'"

In this mind, though strongly urged to fly, he continued, and took his journey to London on horseback, with a trusty servant named John Hull, who on the way "laboured to counsel and perswade him very earnestly to fly, and not to come to the Bishop; and proffered

himself to go with him to save him, and in all perils to venture his life for him and with him. But in no wise would Dr. Taylor consent or agree thereunto. Thus they came up to London, and shortly after, Taylor presented himself before the Bishop of Winchester."

The account of this conference is amusing as well as interesting, but it is both too long and too theological to extract. Taylor, however, according to the reporter, had altogether the best of it, except in the conclusion, which was effected by what Fox, in his marginal note, quaintly calls "Winchester's strong argument, Carry him to prison." He remained in the King's Bench about a year and three-quarters, "in the which time the Papists got certain old tyrannous lawes, which were put down by King Henry VIII. and by King Edward, to be revived again by Parliament, so that now they might, *ex officio*, cite whom they would upon their own suspicion, and charge him with what articles they lusted, and, except they in all things agreed to their purpose, burne them. When these laws were once established, they sent for Dr. Taylor, with certain other prisoners, which were againe convened before the Chancellor, and other Commissioners, about the 22d of January, 1555. The purport and effect of which talke between them, because it is sufficiently described by himselfe in his owne letter, written to a friend of his, I have annexed the said letter here under, as followeth* After that Dr. Taylor thus, with

* The principal question argued in this letter is the marriage of priests. The following extract, which is of Taylor's own writing, gives a good notion of the way in which such examinations might be carried on:—

"Then my Lord Chancellor said, 'Diddest thou never read the book that I set forth of the sacrament?' I answered, 'That I had read it.' Then hee said, 'How likest thou that book?' With that one of the Councell (whose name I know not),¹ said, 'My Lord, that is a good question, for I am sure that book stoppeth all their mouths.' Then said I,

¹ "His right name might bee Sir John Clawbacke."—Fox's marginal note

great spirit and courage, had answered for himselfe, and stoutly rebuked his adversaries for breaking their oath made before to King Henry, and to King Edward his

‘My Lord, I think many things be farre wide of the truth of God’s word in that book.’

“Then my Lord said, ‘Thou art a very varlet.’ To that I answered, ‘That is as bad as Racha, or Fatue.’¹ Then my Lord said, thou art an ignorant beetlebrow.’

“To that I answered, ‘I have read over and over again the Holy Scriptures, and St. Augustine’s works through, and Cyprian, Eusebius, Origene, Gregory Nazianzene, with divers other books, through once; therefore I thank God I am not utterly ignorant. Besides these, my Lord, I professed the Civill Laws, as your Lordship did, and I have read over the Canon Law also.’

“Then my Lord said, ‘With a corrupt judgment thou readeest all things. Touching my profession, it is divinity, in which I have written diverse bookes.’ ‘Then,’ said I, ‘my Lord, ye did write one booke, *De vera obedientia*: I would ye had been constant in that; for indeed ye did never declare a good conscience, that I heard of, but in that one booke.’

“Then my Lord said, ‘Tut, tut, tut, I wrote against Bucer in Priests’ marriages; but such bookes please not such wretches as thou art, which hast been married many yeares.’

“To that I answered, ‘I am married indeed, and I have had nine children in holy matrimony, I thank God: and this I am sure of, that your proceedings now at present in this realme, against priests’ marriages, is the maintenance of the doctrine of divells, against naturall law, civill law, canon law, generall councells, canons of the Apostles, ancient Doctors, and God’s lawes.’

“Then my Lord Chancellor said, ‘Thou falsifiest the generall councell: for there is express mention in the said decree, that priests should be divorced from their wives, which be married.’

“‘Then,’ said I, ‘if those words be there, as you say, then am I content to lose this great head of mine. Let the book be fetched.’”

¹ Taylor had once before twitted the Bishop with his turn for calling hard names.

sonne, and for betraying the realme into the power of the Roman Bishop; they, perceiving that in no case could he be stirred to their wills and purpose, committed him thereupon to prison againe, where he endured till the last of January."

On that day he was again brought before Winchester and other bishops, and condemned to death. Being a priest, however, he was to be degraded before he was delivered to the civil power, and Bonner was appointed to perform that office. "Well," quoth the Bishop, "I am come to degrade you; wherefore put on these vestures."* "No," quoth Dr. Taylor, "I will not." "Wilt thou not?" said the Bishop. "I shall make thee, ere I go." Quoth Dr. Taylor, "You shall not, by the grace of God." Then he charged him upon his obedience to do it; but he would not do it for him.

"So he willed another to put them on his backe; and when he was thoroughly furnished therewith, he set his hands to his side, walking up and down, and said, 'How say you, my Lord, am I not a goodly foole? How say you, my Masters? If I were in Cheape, should I not have boyes enow to laugh at these apish toyes and toying trumpery?' So the Bishop scraped his fingers, thumbes, and the crowne of his head, and did the rest of such like divellish observances.

"At the last, when he should have given Dr. Taylor a stroke on the breast with his crosier-staffe, the Bishop's Chaplain said, 'My Lord, strike him not, for he will sure strike againe.' 'Yea, by St. Peter, will I,' quoth Dr. Taylor, 'the cause is Christ's, and I were no good Christian if I would not fight in my Master's quarrell.' So the Bishop laid his curse on him, but struck him not. . . . And when hee came up, he told Master Bradford (for then both lay in one chamber) that he had made the Bishop of London afraid: 'for,' saith

* The garments of a Roman Catholic priest, which were to be put on that he might be stripped of them, and thus symbolically deprived of his pastoral office. The scraping mentioned below was performed on the parts which were anointed in the Roman ritual of ordination.

he laughingly, 'his Chaplain gave him counsell not to strike me with his crosier-staffe, for that I would strike againe; and, by my troth,' said he, rubbing his hands, 'I made him believe I would doe so indeed.'"

After this ceremony he was delivered to the secular power. His last interview with his family is thus simply told. "Now when the Sheriffe and his company came against St. Botolph church (in Aldgate), Elizabeth cried, saying, 'O my deare Father! Mother, Mother, here is my father led away.' Then cried his wife, 'Rowland, Rowland, where art thou?' for it was a verie darke morning, that the one could not see the other. Dr. Taylor answered, 'Deare wife, I am here,' and staid. The Sheriffe's men would have led him forth, but the Sheriffe said, 'Stay a little, maisters, I prairie you, and let him speake to his wife;' and so they staid:

"Then came she to him; and he tooke his daughter Mary in his armes, and he, his wife, and Elizabeth, kneeled down and said the Lord's Praier: at which sight the Sheriffe wept apace, and so did divers other of the company. After they had praied, he rose up and kissed his wife, and shooke her by the hand, and said, 'Farewell, my deare wife, bee of good comfort, for I am quiet in my conscience. God shall stir up a father for my children.' And then he kissed his daughter Mary, and said, 'God blesse thee, and make thee his servant:' and kissing Elizabeth, hee said, 'God blesse thee, I prairie you all stand strong and stedfast unto Christ and his worde, and keep you from idolatry.' Then said his wife, 'God be with thee, dear Rowland. I will with God's grace meet thee at Hadley.'

"And so he was led forth to the Woolsack. . . And at his comming out, John Hull before spoken of stood at the railes with Dr. Taylor's sonne. When Dr. Taylor saw them, he called them, saying, 'Come hither, my sonne Thomas;' and John Hull lifted up the child, and set him on the horse before his father. Then lifted he up his eyes toward heaven, and praied for his sonne, laide his hatte on the child's head, and blessed him, and so delivered the child to John Hull, whom he tooke by the hand, and said, 'Farewell, John Hull, the faith-

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allest servant that ever man had.' And so they rode forth: the Sheriffe of Essex, with foure yeomen of the guard, and the Sheriffe's men leading him."

He was thus conducted to Hadley, in the neighbourhood of which was appointed the place of his execution, at Aldham Moor. The even and cheerful tenour of his mind is evinced in many points of our past narrative, and confirmed by witnesses. "They that were present, and familiarly conversant with this Dr. Taylor, reported of him that they never did see in him any feare of death; but especially and above all the rest, which besides him suffered at the same time, always shewed himselfe merry and cheerful in time of his imprisonment, as well before his condemnation as after: he kept one countenance and like behaviour. Whereunto he was rather confirmed by the company and presence of Mr. John Bradford, who then was in prison and chamber with him. The same morning, when he was called up by the Sheriffe to go to his burning, he cast his armes about a balk which was in the chamber between Mr. Bradford's bed and his; and there hanging by the hands, said to Mr. Bradford, 'O, Mr. Bradford,' said he, 'what a notable sway should I give if I were hanged,' meaning for that he was a corpulent and big man." His unusual stature seems to have been a favourite subject for jesting with him; for we find a very elaborate piece of quizzing on the same subject, approximating in character to that species of wit which is sometimes denominated *trotting*. It runs thus:—

"At Chelmsford, the Sheriff of Essex, being about to deliver up his prisoner to the Sheriff of Suffolk, sought, as they sat at supper, to induce him to recant. After using the common topics, he concludes, 'Ye should do much better to revoke your opinions, and return to the Catholike church of Rome: if ye will, doubt ye not but ye shall find favour at the Queene's hands. This councill I give you, good Mr. Doctor, of a good heart, and good will toward you; and thereupon I drink to you. In like manner said all the Yeomen of the Guard. Upon that condition, Mr. Doctor, we will all drink to you.'

"When they had all drunk to him, and the cup was

come to him, he stayed a little, as one studying what answer he might give. At the last thus he answered, and said, 'Master Sheriffe, and my masters all, I heartily thank you for your good will; I have hearkened to your words, and marked well your counsels; and, to be plain with you, I do perceive that I have been deceived myself, and am likely to deceive a great many of Hadley of their expectation.' With that word they all rejoiced. 'Yea, good Master Doctor,' quoth the Sheriffe, 'God's blessing on your heart, hold you there still. It is the comfortablest word that we heard you speak yet. What, should ye cast yourself away in vaine: play a wise man's part, and I dare warrant it, ye shall finde favour.' Thus they rejoiced very much at the word, and were very merry.

"At the last, 'Good Master Doctor,' quoth the Sheriffe, 'what meane ye by this, that ye said ye think ye have been deceived yourselfe, and think ye shall deceive many one in Hadley?' 'Would ye know my meaning plainly?' quoth he. 'Yea,' quoth the Sheriffe, 'good Master Doctor, tell it us plainly.'

"'Then,' said Dr. Taylor, 'I will tell you how I have been deceived, and, as I think, I shall deceive a great many more: I am, as you see, a man that has a very great carkasse, which I thought should have been buried in Hadley church-yard, if I had died in my bed, as I well hoped I should have done; but herein I see I was deceived: and there are a great number of wormes in Hadley church-yard, which should have had jolly feeding on this carrion; which they have looked for many a day. But now I know we be deceived, both I and they; for this carkasse must be burnt to ashes, and so shall they lose their bait and feeding, that they looked to have had of it.'

"When the Sheriffe and his company heard him say so, they were amazed, and looked one on another, marvelling at the man's constant minde, that thus without all feare made a jest of the cruell torment, and death now at hand prepared for him. Thus was their expectation clean disappointed. And in this appeareth what was his meditation in his chieftest wealth and pro-

perity, namely, that he should shortly die, and feed wormes in his grave; which meditation, if all our Bishops and spirituall men had used, they had not, for a little worldly glory, forsaken the word of God and truth which they in King Edward's days had preached and set forth, nor yet to maintain the Bishop of Rome's authority, have committed to the fire so many as they did."

"At Lavenham, a small town near Bury, where the cavalcade remained two days, the attempts to induce him to recant were renewed by the Sheriffe and gentlemen of the county, of whom there was a great concourse, with the promise even of promotion to a bishopric. On the 8th of February he was brought out to complete his earthly journey. The same spirit animated him to the end. On the way, being alighted from his horse, 'he lept, and fet a friske or twaine,' as men commonly do in dauncing. 'Why, Master Doctor,' quoth the Sheriffe, 'how do you now?' He answered, 'Well, God be praised, good Master Sheriffe, never better; for now I know I am almost at home. I lack not past two stiles to go over, and I am even at my father's house; but Master Sheriffe,' said he, 'shall we not go thorow Hadley?' Yes,' quoth the Sheriffe, 'you shall go thorow Hadley.' 'Then,' said he, 'O good Lord, I thank thee, I shall yet once again ere I die, see my flock, whom thou, Lord, knowest I have most heartily loved, and truly taught.'

"This wish being gratified, his last hours were soothed by the accents which of all must have been most grateful, the prayers and blessings of the poor, to whom he had been as a father in the relieving of their corporeal wants. The street of Hadley was lined with those who invoked succour and strength for him, mingled with exclamations of woe at the grievous loss which had befallen themselves. Nor in his own extremity did he forget the humblest and most needy of those who had been objects of his care: but stopping by the alms-houses he cast out of a glove to the inmates of them such money as remained of what charitable persons had given for his support in prison (his benefices being sequestrated): and missing two of them, he asked, 'Is the blind man and

blind woman that dwelt here alive?' He was answered, 'Yea, they are there within.' Then threw he glove and all in at the window, and so rode forth. Thus this good father and provider for the poore took his leave of those for whom all his life he had a singular care and studie.

"At the last, coming to Aldham Common, the place assigned where he should suffer, and seeing a great multitude of people gathered together, he asked, 'What place is this; and what meaneth it that so much people are gathered hither?' It was answered, 'It is Aldham Common, the place where you must suffer; and the people are come to looke upon you.' 'Then,' said he, 'thanked be God, I am even at home; and so light from his horse, and with both his hands rent the hood from his head.

"Now was his head notted evil favourably, and clipped much like as a man would clip a foole's head, which cost the good Bishop Bonner had bestowed upon him when he degraded him. But when the people saw his reverend and ancient face with a long white beard, they burst out with weeping teares, and cried saying, 'God save thee, good Doctor Taylor!' with such other like godly wishes. Then would he have spoken to the people, but the yeomen of the guard were so busie about him, that as soon as he opened his mouth, one or other thrust a tippestaff into his mouth, and would in nowise permit him to speak.

"As they were piling the faggots, one Warwick cruelly cast a faggot at him, which light on his head and broke his face, that the bloud ran down his visage. Then said Dr. Taylor, 'O friend, I have harme enough; what needed that?'"

Here we take leave of him; for it is needless again to enter into the revolting details of the barbarous method of execution especially prescribed for errors in matters of faith. The affection borne towards him was beautifully manifested in a poor woman, who knelt at the stake to join in his prayers, and could not be driven away by threats or fear. His last moments were like his life, tranquil, fearless, and forgiving.

Here, for the present at all events, we close this work. We have now traced the Grecian nation from the outset of authentic history to the period of its utmost greatness in arms, arts, and letters: and in doing so, according to the plan laid down in our introduction, we hope to have accumulated a mass of historical anecdotes, which, independent of their intrinsic beauty or interest, may possess a further value, as tending to throw some light one on another. Like the close of the Persian war, the close of the Peloponnesian war is a remarkable epoch: the former marks the beginning of the greatness, the latter the beginning of the decline of Greece. From thenceforward the history of Greece becomes more complicated, and our authorities less satisfactory; inasmuch as, at the close of Xenophon's Hellenics, we lose that series of admirable contemporary writers who have hitherto guided us; and the late compilers, such as Diodorus and Plutarch, make no adequate amends for the loss. The study, therefore, of the succeeding portion of history becomes less agreeable and more difficult: at the same time there is no want of remarkable incidents; for if the annals of Athens and Sparta become less important, the rise of Thebes to its short-lived power, the sudden growth of Thessaly under Jason of Pheræ, of Macedonia under Philip, and, above all, the renovation of the old Grecian spirit in the Achæan league, would supply abundance to fill another volume, which should bring down the history of Greece to its final absorption into the Roman empire.

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